

# **Bejewelled: the male body and adornment in early modern England**

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**The British Museum**

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This thesis investigates the significance of the jewellery that was worn, owned, and circulated by men within sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England, to provide a social and historical context for objects that are often viewed in terms of their materiality. Within the period 1509-1625 male consumption of jewellery was just as great as female consumption, yet jewellery has traditionally been considered a feminine preoccupation. This thesis readdresses this imbalance and in doing so aligns itself with the growing studies on masculinity, community, and sociability.

Traditionally, studies on jewellery have adopted a more chronological or stylistic approach but there is now evidence of movement towards providing a social context for these objects and this thesis is a part of this development. In the early modern period jewellery was not valued purely for its intrinsic monetary worth; it had the ability to reflect meanings of magnificence and lineage, as well as sustain social bonds and networks of reciprocity. The myriad meanings of a man's jewelled possessions demonstrate that jewellery was important and therefore constituted a valid part of a society's material culture.

This thesis centres on the collections of early modern European jewellery within the department of Prehistory and Europe at the British Museum. It is interdisciplinary in nature and combines strong object analysis with evidence from documentary, literary, archival, and visual sources, to provide a new context for these holdings. Finds continually reported through the 1996 Treasure Act have also been integrated into this research, to demonstrate the importance of jewellery for men across all social levels. Consequently, this thesis bridges the gap between traditional art history scholarship and archaeological work to provide a strong social and historical context for jewellery and men in Tudor and Jacobean England.

## **Declaration**

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been submitted, either in the same or different form,  
to this or any other University for a degree.

Signature:.....

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## **Abbreviations**

AHRC: Arts and Humanities Research Council

BM: British Museum

NPG: National Portrait Gallery

P&E: Department of Prehistory and Europe, British Museum

PAS: Portable Antiquities Scheme

RCIN: Royal Collection Inventory Number

VAM: Victoria and Albert Museum

## **Transcription Conventions**

Semi-diplomatic transcription; punctuation as the original; contractions expanded and supplied letter inserted in square brackets; superscriptions dropped and supplied letters italicised; <> denotes inserted text by the scribe above the line; [ ] denotes missing letters silently inserted; {} denotes illegible or missing text; marginalia and notes placed in footnotes.

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### 1.1 Spanish shipwrecks and men's gold



Figure 1.1: Gold and enamelled oval-shaped pendant with an image of Madonna and Child surrounded by an inscription and to the reverse set with an amethyst and four emeralds, also with a pearl hanging pendant; Spanish and English; sixteenth century. National Museums Northern Ireland, A1.1990 (Ulster Museum).

In the early 1990s the Ulster Museum in Belfast acquired a gold and enamelled jewel with an image of the Madonna and Child surrounded by a sunburst. The picture is inserted within a later border that bears a double-lined inscription in italics with strong traces of black enamelling. The lettering reads:

When Spanneshe fleet fled home for feeare [ANNO] This golden picktur then was  
founde \* Fast feixed vnto Spanniards eare [1588] Whoo drowned laye on Irish ground  
x.

This unusual record tells us that what had once been a Spanish sailor's earring with a Catholic devotional image had been converted into this pendant. The new owner had created a gem-set gold border with enamelled scrollwork decoration at the apex and a fleur-de-lys at the base to which is attached a pearl hanging pendant. The collet in which the large amethyst of octagonal form is set was then inscribed at the sides with a further inscription: 'The first gift to Mary'.

While this might be a reference to the Virgin Mary, it seems likely that as it passed into its new context it took on new meanings. Prior to the purchase of the pendant by the Ulster Museum, this jewel had been sold at Christie's London in 1972 by Sir John Simon Every, Bt. (1914-1988). A note in the sale catalogue states that the vendor, Sir John, was a direct descendent of the Mary referred to in the inscription.<sup>1</sup> Thus if the inscription is to be believed, it came from the ear of a dead Spaniard whose body was presumably washed up in Ireland following the English success in the Armada. It was then transformed from a trophy of war into a token of family love and affection and eventually into an important family heirloom. That an object with dimensions of only 30.34 x 59.72 mm can have such multiple resonances demonstrates the value of jewelled possessions both for their original owners and for cultural historians today.

When it was sold, the pendant was immediately recognised for its connections with a substantial collection of jewellery already on display in Ulster. It may have come from the same source: a Spanish galleass, the *Girona*, which was wrecked off Lacada Point, near the Giant's Causeway in County Antrim, Northern Ireland as it returned home in October 1588 following defeat during the Spanish Armada. When the ship was recovered in 1967 by the Belgian archaeologist Robert Sténuit off the Antrim coastline at Portballintrae, close to where it wrecked, it yielded important finds that provided crucial insights into sixteenth-century Spanish culture; above all it gave a glimpse into the material goods that gave meaning to an all-male environment and male consumption habits. For when it went down, the *Girona* was a military ship with only men on board, many of whom were the young noblemen taking part in the Armada enterprise. Yet amongst the salvaged artefacts were numerous jewels – gold chains, rings, and pendants – many set with precious or semi-precious stones, as well as other small objects of personal adornment, such as gold buttons. These archaeological survivals, which can be securely sited and dated, help us to understand better the complex relationships that Renaissance and early modern European men had with precious ornaments and jewels.

For example, amongst the valuables that were recovered from the *Girona* was a large gold ring inscribed with 'MADAME DE CHAMPAGNEY MDXXIII' with a collet that now lacks the gemstone it once held (fig.1.2).

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<sup>1</sup> *Icons, Mediaeval and Later Works of Art*, Christie's London sale catalogue, 22 February 1972, lot 30.



Figure 1.2: Gold ring with rectangular bezel missing its gemstone and inscribed to the outer face of the hoop; French; dated 1524. National Museums Northern Ireland, BGR 7 (Ulster Museum).

Research into the ownership of this ring demonstrates that it had originally been given by Nicole Bonvalot of Besançon (Madame de Champagny) to her husband Nicolas Perrenot de Granvelle (1486-1550) on the birth of their third surviving son Jerome in 1524. It eventually passed into the hands of Bonvalot's grandson, Don Tomas Perrenoto Sobrino de Cardenal Granvela. He died on the *Girona* at the age of twenty-two along with almost one thousand three hundred men on 26 October 1588.<sup>2</sup> The discovery of this ring enabled the wreckage to be identified conclusively as that of the *Girona*. Contemporary accounts confirmed that Don Tomas de Granvela had been travelling with the highly-esteemed captain Don Alonzo Martinez de Leiva and was amongst those who had died with him.<sup>3</sup> Importantly for this thesis, it demonstrates that a ring once commissioned by a woman to celebrate her success at producing another son, was being worn by a male relative during battle many decades later. Passing from hand to hand, it had acquired an importance that went well beyond its monetary value.

The identification of another Spanish shipwreck off the coast of Key West, Florida in 1973 was also made possible by piecing together evidence from the numismatic finds, pottery, firearms, swords, gold and silver bullion, infantry weapons, navigational instruments, stone cannon shot, religious items, and gold chains and jewellery. The presence of these items suggested that the ship had been a part of a treasure fleet, one of three ships that were

<sup>2</sup> Robert Sténuit, *Treasures of the Armada*, translated by Francine Barker (Newton Abbot, Devon: David & Charles, 1972), pp.210-11.

<sup>3</sup> Cesáreo Fernandez Duro, *La Armada Invencible*, 2 vols. (Madrid: Est. Tipografico de los Sucesores de Rivadeneyra, Impresores de la Real Casa, 1884-85), vol.2, p.364; Hugh Allingham and Robert Crawford, *Captain Cuellar's Adventures in Connacht & Ulster AD 1588. A Picture of the Times, Drawn from Contemporary Sources to Which Is Added an Introduction and Complete Transcription of Captain Cuellar's Narrative of the Spanish Armada and His Adventures in Ireland* (London: Elliot Stock, 1897), p.65; Sténuit, *Treasures*, p.211; Laurence Flanagan, *Irish Wrecks of the Spanish Armada* (Dublin: County House, 1995), p.33. Don Alonzo was in command of the Genoese carrack, the *Sancta Maria Encoronada*, and with him were many young noble men. For an account of the circumstances that led to many of the young Spanish noblemen from the Armada being on board the *Girona* and eventually perishing with their jewels see Sténuit, *Treasures*, pp.103-39.



known to have sunk in the region in 1622. By matching the serial numbers found on three silver ingots with its manifesto, the *Nuestra Señora de Atocha* was eventually identified.<sup>4</sup>

The *Atocha*, along with the *Santa Margarita*, was a guard ship sent to protect the twenty-six vessels of the *Tierra Firme* plate fleet that set sail in March 1622 to bring bullion and treasures from the New World to Spain. Upon leaving Havana on 4 September 1622 the fleet encountered a hurricane, which was to cause the sinking of the *Atocha* the following day in the Florida Keys. Many of the items discovered, from the plates and ewers, to the salts and wine cups, were clearly intended for use on board the *Atocha* by her wealthy male passengers who were returning to Spain. Where previously an understanding of early seventeenth-century Spanish material culture had been influenced by the survival of primarily ecclesiastical plate retained in church treasuries and a comparable dearth of secular wares, the *Atocha's* yield provided a glimpse of an otherwise almost lost domestic world.<sup>5</sup>

Here too, amongst the personal items recovered from the sea-bed belonging to the forty-eight male passengers and two hundred and twenty crew members, were a number of jewels.<sup>6</sup> A sale of the salvaged items was held by the auction-house Christie's in its New York rooms in 1988. The catalogue published for this occasion documents the jewels (now dispersed) that were most commonly found on board ships carrying male passengers and crew: gold chains and dress ornaments. Fourteen lots comprised of intact gold chains of varying size and weight, while a number of lots consisted of an individual gold chain link, (the latter suggesting that many chains were broken upon the wrecking of the ship).<sup>7</sup>

The team responsible for the excavation of the underwater archaeological site noted that many of the weights of the chain links corresponded to those of contemporary gold escudo coins.<sup>8</sup> The malleability of the gold enabled easy removal of an individual link from the chain, allowing each to act as a reliable form of payment. The portability of a chain worn around the neck, in contrast with carrying a purse full of coins, and the ability to conceal it under clothing (should the ship be subject to looting by English or Dutch privateers) explain the popularity of such items. Taking into consideration the fact that Spanish merchants were required to pay the Crown a twenty percent tax on all trade, called the *quinto*, the chains may

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<sup>4</sup> R. Duncan Mathewson III, *Treasure of the Atocha. Sixteen Dramatic Years in Search of the Historic Wreck* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1986), pp.59-62.

<sup>5</sup> *Gold and Silver of the 'Atocha' and 'Santa Margarita'*, Christie's New York sale catalogue, 14 and 15 June 1988, pp.26-30.

<sup>6</sup> *Gold and Silver of the 'Atocha' and 'Santa Margarita'*, Christie's New York, pp.17-18, 26-31.

<sup>7</sup> A total of forty-three gold chains were recovered from the site, with a combined length of almost 55 metres. See Mathewson, *Treasure*, p.94.

<sup>8</sup> Mathewson, *Treasure*, p.C-13.

have also been an attempt to disguise gold as personal items of dress to avoid payment of this tax.<sup>9</sup> Despite strict sumptuary legislation, designed to protect and stabilise the Spanish economy, the wearing of chains by men was permitted.<sup>10</sup> It is evident that these objects had a practical function, which was manifest in their potential to be converted into hard cash and in their ability to evade paying taxes. Yet, when comparing the surviving chains, there is no marked homogeneity in form and style.<sup>11</sup> So despite the need for conformity in order to use the links as currency, these items were personal to the wearer and could reflect ideas of magnificence and status associated with personal identity as well as with convenience. As this suggests, an examination of the physical properties of this type of jewel raises important issues and subsequently demonstrates effectively how the study of material culture, and more specifically jewellery studies, can be employed to investigate wider social and historical concerns.

## 1.2 Theories of Renaissance and early modern masculinity

The jewels discovered within the contexts of the two shipwrecks discussed above provide ample opportunities to explore the meanings that such objects had for men within the sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries. Indeed it allows us to ask how, as a ring moved from female to male hands, as with the Madame de Champagney ring, it may have accumulated new gendered meanings.

There is now a wide acknowledgement that masculinity, like femininity, is a social construct.<sup>12</sup> According to Bruce Smith 'masculine identity of whatever kind is something men give to each other. It is not achieved in isolation'.<sup>13</sup> This approach was taken in contrast to traditional views that the male experience was the norm against which women's lives were gendered.<sup>14</sup> Instead, Smith, Alexandra Shepard and, more recently, Amanda Bailey and Roze

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<sup>9</sup> Mathewson, *Treasure*, pp.19, 94; *Gold and Silver of the 'Atocha' and 'Santa Margarita'*, Christie's New York, p.13.

<sup>10</sup> In addition to chains, men were also permitted to wear hat ornaments, see Priscilla E. Muller, *Jewels in Spain 1500-1800* (Madrid: Ediciones El Viso, 2012), pp.118-20.

<sup>11</sup> Some chains have links that are ornamented with reeded or spiralled patterns, while some are flattened.

<sup>12</sup> Some useful works on this topic are: Harry Brod, ed., *The Making of Masculinities: The New Man's Studies* (London, 1987); John Tosh, "What Should Historians do with Masculinity? Reflections on 19<sup>th</sup>C Britain", *History Workshop Journal*, 38 (1994), p.180; Raewyn W. Connell, *Masculinities*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005); Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Will Fisher, *Materializing Gender in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Amanda Bailey and Roze Hentschell, eds., *Masculinity and the Metropolis of Vice, 1550-1650* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

<sup>13</sup> Bruce Smith, *Shakespeare and Masculinity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p.60 cited in Keith M. Botelho, *Renaissance Earwitnesses: Rumor and Early Modern Masculinity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p.5.

<sup>14</sup> Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, p.2.

Hentschell have begun to explore alternative modes of expressing masculine identity.<sup>15</sup> For example, Shepard focuses on how forms of masculinity were expressed by those who were excluded from traditional forms of patriarchal manhood. She argues that unmarried men, non-hereditary sons, old men, or those that were economically inactive were not considered ‘failed men’. Instead, ‘they pursued different codes of manhood’ choosing to demonstrate their male virtues through fraternal bonding, often-violent competitions, or privileges of a social and political status.<sup>16</sup> In their work, Bailey and Hentschell focus on London in order to discuss how the geography of the city allowed men ‘to gain from, reject, or even revise patriarchal dictates’.<sup>17</sup> They argue that ‘manhood was negotiated, made visible, and even engendered through the performance of misconduct’, with activities including drinking and gambling and in spheres such as the church or the street.<sup>18</sup> Other historians are applying these approaches to literary tropes. Keith Botelho’s *Renaissance Earwitnesses* (2009) focuses on the debate about ‘the gendering of information production and reception’ on the early modern stage.<sup>19</sup> Botelho is concerned with male gossip: how it perpetuates fear and then unhinges male authority in the face of rumours. He employs the term ‘earwitness’ to reflect the process in which information must be sifted and distilled to reach the truth. He argues that this was essential for upholding ‘male informational authority’.<sup>20</sup> In the context of the stage he argues that ‘male characters who fail to practice earwitnessing threaten their own masculine authority’.<sup>21</sup>

In common with all these works is an acceptance that masculinity was constructed just as much between men as in opposition to women. This signals a shift away from a strict male-female dichotomy, which in turn allows for new interpretations of established ideas about how men presented themselves and were, in turn, perceived by their contemporary viewers. This thesis draws on these studies on masculinity, community, and sociability to explore and understand the multiplicity of ways that men used jewels and bodily ornamentation as forms of exchange and display in England in the early modern period.

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<sup>15</sup> Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*; Bailey and Hentschell, eds., *Masculinity and the Metropolis of Vice*.

<sup>16</sup> Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, pp.6, 95, 140, 245, 249.

<sup>17</sup> Bailey and Hentschell, eds., *Masculinity and the Metropolis of Vice*, p.3.

<sup>18</sup> Bailey and Hentschell, eds., *Masculinity and the Metropolis of Vice*, pp.3, 8-12.

<sup>19</sup> Botelho, *Renaissance Earwitnesses*, p.3.

<sup>20</sup> Botelho, *Renaissance Earwitnesses*, p.2.

<sup>21</sup> Botelho, *Renaissance Earwitnesses*, p.5.

As Victoria de Grazia explains, ‘In Western societies, acts of exchange and consumption have long been obsessively gendered, usually as female.’<sup>22</sup> While almost all of the scholarly work on jewellery has been focused on female use and display, in this period men acted as agents for the production of jewels; they often owned the jewels belonging to their wives; and they decorated their own bodies with jewels which are often overlooked because they were stitched onto their clothing. This is not to suggest that jewellery was not important to women. Elite women such as Elizabeth I (r.1558-1603), Elizabeth Talbot [Bess of Hardwick] (c.1527-1608), countess of Shrewsbury, and others were avid commissioners of jewels and took great pride in their ability to acquire and display rare examples.<sup>23</sup> Non-elite women were sometimes criticised for their attachment to frivolous expenses which might bankrupt their husbands. The diarist Thomas Platter (d.1628), travelling in England at the end of the sixteenth century, commented on the dress of English women remarking that ‘some may well wear velvet for the street – quite common with them – who cannot afford a crust of dry bread at home I have been told’.<sup>24</sup>

But because so much of the contemporary Renaissance and early modern rhetoric has focused on either female display or feminine vanity, the meanings that jewels may have had for men have often been overlooked. In exploring men and their jewellery, therefore, this thesis shifts attention to male social interactions. It also explores the tensions and anxieties over the wearing of jewels by men. Excessive display of apparel and jewels could create anxieties either because, as with women, this could be regarded as immoral, wasteful, or worse, as effeminate. This idea was prevalent in some contemporary literature with proclamations that ‘all men of worth are taught by reading that Excesse is a great Sinne: that Pride is the first steppe to the downefall of shame’.<sup>25</sup> Some jewels, however, were so closely associated with special status, such as the Order of the Garter, that they never attracted any

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<sup>22</sup> Victoria de Grazia, "Introduction" in *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*, edited by Victoria De Grazia and Ellen Furlough, 1-10 (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 1996), p.1.

<sup>23</sup> Elizabeth I's penchant for jewels was so well-known that gifts from courtiers often took the form of unique designs. For example in 1586, Sir Christopher Hatton (c.1540-1591) gave a head ornament of ‘Gordian knots with alphas and omegas’, while an earlier gift in 1572 from Ambrose Dudley (c.1530-1590), earl of Warwick, consisted of a jewel in the form of ‘a branch of bay leaves, with one white rose and six red roses of enamelled gold on it, a spider and a bee’ – Joan Evans, *A History of Jewellery 1100-1870*, 2nd ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1970), p.117. Contemporary portraiture shows royal and elite women prominently displaying their jewels, such as Elizabeth Knollys, Lady Layton (Montacute House, The National Trust) or Anne of Denmark (1574-1619) (NPG 127).

<sup>24</sup> Thomas Platerus (the Younger), *Thomas Platter's Travels in England 1599*, translated and with an introduction by Clare Williams (London: Jonathan Cape, 1937), p.182.

<sup>25</sup> Robert Greene, *A Quip for an Upstart Courtier: Or a Quaint Dispute Betweene Veluet Breeches and Cloth Breeches. Wherein Is Plainely Set Downe the Disorders in All Estates and Trades* (1583), C2v.

criticism. How these tensions between appropriate and inappropriate display were negotiated remains a key concern underpinning each of the chapters within this work.

### 1.3 'Sweet England's Jewels'<sup>26</sup>

To explore this issue, this thesis focuses on England with references to Continental Europe where relevant. For example, hat ornaments, in particular, cannot be discussed outside their widespread European diffusion or their widely accepted French origin.<sup>27</sup> It is also important to note that, of course, James I (r.1603-1625), one of the protagonists of this dissertation, was also King of Scotland and had many ties to France. Nonetheless, much of the material discussed in this dissertation was actually found or collected in England itself.

This choice of geographic focus is shaped by the fact that research for this thesis has been undertaken within the context of a Collaborative Doctoral Award with the British Museum. This means that the collections of the department of Prehistory and Europe constitute the bulk of the material evidence.<sup>28</sup> Although I was able to frame the dissertation freely, it was important that it made a major contribution to a more detailed understanding of the British Museum's collections. The object categories selected for use within this thesis have been important in providing the dissertation's outline and the focus of the different chapters, which look at, in particular, rings of the serjeants-at-law, signet rings, posy rings, and dress accessories.

These British Museum jewels all have a distinctly English geographic bias: the rings given by newly-created serjeants-at-law, termed inaccurately serjeants' rings, reflect an English tradition; the use of signet rings is cross-continental but the English material is supported by the College of Arms and information on owners from the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*; while posy rings are known to have existed in Europe, there is a large body of literature concerning the English examples and the British Museum has a group of over seven hundred, many of which have an English provenance; the dress accessories mostly include items declared through the Treasure Act (1996) and represent a corpus that is primarily English in nature.

If providing a geographic boundary is difficult, dating jewellery is even more problematic. In his most recent publication, Keith Thomas presents the difficulties in defining

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<sup>26</sup> Janet Arnold, "Sweet England's Jewels" in *Princely Magnificence: Court Jewels of the Renaissance, 1500-1630*, 31-40 (London: Debrett's Peerage Ltd, 1980), p.31.

<sup>27</sup> Yvonne Hackenbroch, *Enseignes: Renaissance Hat Jewels* (Florence: Studio per edizioni scelte, 1996) attributes a French origin to these hat jewels; this view is current and to-date remains uncontested.

<sup>28</sup> This thesis is the result of an Arts and Humanities Council funded Collaborative Doctoral Award, with the British Museum as the non-Higher Education Institution.

the term early modern. A relatively recent invention in the last fifty years, the period 'early modern' has been employed by various historians to indicate a start date of anywhere from 1350 to 1560, and an end date ranging from 1660 to 1800.<sup>29</sup> The period covered by this thesis begins with the accession of Henry VIII (r.1509-1547) in 1509 and ends with the death of James I of England in 1625. These mark both a shift in attitudes towards male consumption of jewels and a changing aesthetic within the jewels themselves.<sup>30</sup>

The sixteenth century was a time of increased wealth for the nation and its rulers. Henry VIII used his clothing and jewels to reflect his stature, often in competition with other European monarchs. Encounters between him and Francis I of France (r.1515-1547) in the early-sixteenth century provided opportunities for both kings to exploit their clothing 'as a form of competitive magnificence'.<sup>31</sup> A first meeting took place at the Field of Cloth of Gold in 1520, followed later by one at Calais in October 1532, where it was observed that 'The French king's doublet was set all over with stones and diamonds [...] and his company far surpassed the English in apparel'.<sup>32</sup> At a later meeting Henry wore 'a robe of violet cloth of gold, with a collar [...] valued at more than 400,000 cr'.<sup>33</sup>

By the time of the first Stuart king, jewels had moved beyond mere expressions of wealth and power to take on more complex meanings. As we will see, the Lyte Jewel was given as a token of thanks by James I to Thomas Lyte (1568-1638) of Lytes Cary in Somerset, following the production of a genealogy of the king by Lyte.<sup>34</sup> Rather than simply representing the extravagances of the Jacobean court, Hugh Tait notes that the motivations of the king were more political, since in the early days of his reign he faced questions over his

<sup>29</sup> Keith Thomas, *The Ends of Life: Roads to Fulfilment in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p.4.

<sup>30</sup> This project could have extended to the Glorious Revolution of 1688. It could be argued that this would be an appropriate end date, since David Kuchta has identified a clear shift in masculine practices from 'sartorial splendour' to a more refined aesthetic coinciding with the accession of William III (r.1689-1702) and Mary II (r.1689-1694) – David Kuchta, "The Making of the Self-Made Man: Class, Clothing, and English Masculinity, 1688-1832" in *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*, edited by Victoria De Grazia and Ellen Furlough, 54-78 (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 1996), p.56. This is much earlier than the widely accepted view of J.C. Flügel that the 'great masculine renunciation' occurred at the turn of the nineteenth century, see J.C. Flügel, *The Psychology of Clothes* (London: Hogarth Press, 1930), pp.110-13. While a broader time span would result in more material and allow a focus on the changes created by some of the seventeenth-century revolutionary moments, this would go beyond the boundaries of what is possible in a three-year funded doctorate.

<sup>31</sup> Maria Hayward, *Dress at the Court of King Henry VIII* (Leeds: Maney Publishing, 2007), p.227.

<sup>32</sup> J.S. Brewer, J. Gairdner, and R.H. Brodie, eds., *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, 1509-1547*, 21 vols. (1862-1932), vol. 5, no. 1484 taken from James Gairdner, ed., "Henry VIII: October 1532, 25-31", *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 5: 1531-1532*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=77497&strquery=worde> accessed 23 March 2012.

<sup>33</sup> Brewer et al., *Letters and Papers*, vol.5, no.1485 taken from Gairdner, ed., "Henry VIII: October 1532, 25-31", British History Online.

<sup>34</sup> The Lyte Jewel is discussed in Chapter 10.

legitimacy.<sup>35</sup> The Lyte Jewel has resonance in this thesis for its importance to Thomas Lyte and his descendents, since the retention of these items by subsequent generations highlights the prevalence of ideas of memory and the notion of lineage. Furthermore, the seventeenth century sees a shift in jewellery design from the importance of the goldsmith and enameller to a greater penchant for precious stones. The beginnings of this new aesthetic can be witnessed at the Jacobean court, where never before had such extravagance for jewels been seen than under James I and his wife Anne of Denmark (1574-1619). With courtiers trying to gain favour with the sovereign, conspicuous display of clothing and jewels was paramount amongst the men at court, and so this proves to be a particularly useful period for this thesis.<sup>36</sup>

#### 1.4 The gender of jewellery

The term 'jewellery' is often limiting in that in modern times it usually denotes items such as rings, chains, pendants, and badges.<sup>37</sup> These objects were not worn in isolation and one of the central arguments of this thesis is the importance of reconnecting all the available forms of ornamentation, regardless of materiality. The most valuable items in gold or silver and set with precious or semi-precious stones when displayed in museum galleries for their aesthetic qualities are often separate from clothing accessories such as aglets, buttons or buckles, which are often located in archaeological contexts.<sup>38</sup> But the entire male body, from head to toe, acted as a site for the placing of jewels. By including the concept of 'adornment' as jewellery, we are able to incorporate a whole range of object types that are usually excluded from jewellery studies and whose importance and prominence is now coming to light as a result of the 1996 Treasure Act and findings from both metal detectorists and mudlarks working on the Thames foreshore. This includes dress ornaments, jewels intended to

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<sup>35</sup> Hugh Tait, *Catalogue of the Waddesdon Bequest in the British Museum: The Jewels*, 3 vols. (London: British Museum Press, 1986), vol. 1, cat. no. 33.

<sup>36</sup> Francis Osborne, *Historical Memoirs on the Reigns of Elizabeth and King James* (1658) published in Sir Walter Scott, ed., *Secret History of the Court of James the First: Containing, 1. Osborne's Traditional Memoirs, 2. Sir Anthony Weldon's Court and Character of King James, 3. Aulicus Coquinariae, 4. Sir Edward Peyton's Divine Catastrophe of the House of Stuarts*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh; London: John Ballantyne and Co.; Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1811), vol.1, pp.274-75.

<sup>37</sup> The definition provided by the Oxford English Dictionary Online gives 'Jewellers' work; gems or ornaments made or sold by jewellers; esp. precious stones in mountings; jewels collectively, or as a form of adornment' – "jewellery | jewelry, n.", OED Online. June 2012 (Oxford University Press) <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/101219?redirectedFrom=jewellery> (accessed August 28, 2012). This seems to be all encompassing but an earlier print edition defines 'jewellery' as simply 'rings, brooches, necklaces, etc., regarded collectively' – Della Thompson, ed., *The Pocket Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, 8th ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

<sup>38</sup> There are of course exceptions to this and the case showing material for Tudor England at the British Museum does now include a number of dress accessories alongside other items of jewellery.

embellish dress that used their fabric backing as a foil. Counted amongst these are hat ornaments, hooks, clasps, buckles, points, and buttons.<sup>39</sup> The reintegration of these types of goods with rings, brooches, chains, hatbands, badges, belts, and swords needs to be undertaken if we are to understand how men viewed the full display of their wealth, status, and lineage in this period (fig.1.3).



Figure 1.3: Detail of Gregory Fiennes, tenth Baron Dacre, from double portrait with his mother Mary Neville, Lady Dacre; Hans Ewouts; 1559. National Portrait Gallery NPG 6855.

Gregory Fiennes (1539-1594), tenth Baron Dacre is depicted by the artist Hans Ewouts (fl.1540-1574) in a portrait in which he stands alongside his mother, Mary Neville (1524-c.1576), Lady Dacre. His sumptuous clothing indicates clearly the wealth and status of this individual, who had only recently been restored his honours and titles, following the removal of them from his father after his execution in 1541. Yet it is not only his dress that warrants attention. Fiennes' body is also ornamented by a number of jewels: pairs of gold

<sup>39</sup> Although the focus of this thesis is on the inclusion of these small dress accessories, other items such as watches, pomanders, sword pommels, and daggers can be incorporated into a wider classification of jewellery.



aglets and gold buttons have been placed on his fur-lined garment; gold buttons fasten the front of his doublet; a gold chain encircles his neck; the leather belt around his waist has gold strap-ends and buckle; and the hilt of his sword is embellished with gold or gilded decoration. This visual source shows how such items could be worn in combination, showing how a man wished to present himself and contributing also to how he wished to be viewed by his contemporaries.

In determining the meanings that jewellery had for men in the early modern period it is necessary to identify the types of jewels that were traditionally worn, owned, or circulated by men. While using pictorial evidence is useful it cannot ever be all-encompassing and it is necessary to turn to the jewels themselves. However, the difficulty in establishing male use is ably demonstrated by looking at one particular object type. Rings are common to both men and women and so, when presented with a particular example to determine usage, physical indications such as diameter or girth should be considered when thinking about the sex of its user or recipient. However, even when we know that a ring was used exclusively by men it is difficult to see this in the object itself. For example, units of measurements cannot be applied to the rings presented by the serjeants-at-law upon their appointment to this degree. For the weight and size of the rings depended wholly on the status of the recipient. Therefore, it is difficult to establish direct gender associations from empirical evidence alone; it requires considerable contextual information to make sense of who might have owned and used these items.

There are some categories of jewels that are usually classified as belonging to men, such as the hat ornament or heavy-set gold chains, but even here there are anomalies. While large gold chains were frequently depicted almost exclusively on men in English portraiture, these same items of jewellery can be found around the necks of Dutch women. Determining the gender of a jewel's owner is equally problematic when an object can be worn by men and women alike, such as the earring. In the early seventeenth-century tract *Haec-vir*, a response to *Hic mulier*, the character of the Man-woman references the work of an Italian poet whose words condemn the womanly behaviour of men:

Into his eares two Rings conuayed are  
Of golden Wyer, at which on either side,  
Two Indian Pearles, in making like two Peares,  
Of passing price were pendant at his eares.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> *Haec-Vir: or the Womanish-Man: Being an Answer to a late Booke intituled Hic-Mulier. Exprest in a briefe Dialogue betweene Haec-Vir the Womanish-Man, and Hic-Mulier the Man-Woman.* (London: 1620), C3r. This

These words would suggest that the earring was considered a jewel primarily to be worn by women, yet ‘The Chandos Portrait’, supposedly representing the playwright William Shakespeare (1564-1616) clearly shows the sitter with a gold hoop earring in his left ear (NPG 1).<sup>41</sup> Contemporary portraiture also shows men such as Sir Francis Drake (1540-1596) (NPG 1627) and Sir Walter Raleigh (1552-1618) (NPG 7), figures hardly considered womanly in conduct, with a single earring. William Harrison may have had these men in mind when he wrote that ‘Some lusty courtiers also and gentlemen of courage do wear either rings of gold, stones, or pearl in their ears’.<sup>42</sup>

Charles I (r.1625-1649) is perhaps the most noted male figure to wear an earring. A watercolour miniature from the studio of Isaac Oliver (c.1565-1617) shows Charles as a boy with an earring in his left ear (NPG 3064), while a pear-shaped pearl pendant at his left ear is prominently displayed in the triple painting of the king by Anthony Van Dyck (1599-1641) (RCIN 404420). Such was his attachment to this jewel that Charles famously wore it to the scaffold. After his execution it was removed from his ear and given to his eldest surviving daughter, Mary Henrietta, Princess Royal (1631-1660).<sup>43</sup> The earring, a drop-shaped freshwater pearl mounted in a gold and enamelled Imperial crown setting, now resides in the Portland Collection at Welbeck, Nottinghamshire (fig.1.4). Its authenticity is confirmed by a manuscript note in the hand of Queen Mary II (1662-1694), also within the Portland Collection (fig.1.5).<sup>44</sup>

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extract was taken from Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso* (1516) translated by John Harington, London, 1591, and shows how the character of Rogero becomes effeminate in his pursuit of Alcyna.

<sup>41</sup> ‘The Chandos Portrait’, c.1600-1610, attributed to John Taylor (d.1651); oil on canvas; NPG 1. Scientific analysis has shown that the earring is contemporary with the portrait. Discussion on the identity of the sitter is in Tarnya Cooper, *Searching for Shakespeare* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 2006), cat. no. 3.

<sup>42</sup> William Harrison, *The Description of England. The Classic Contemporary Account of Tudor Social Life*, edited by Georges Edelen (Washington D.C; New York: The Folger Shakespeare Library; Dover Publications, 1994), p.147.

<sup>43</sup> The earring remained within royal hands until it was given to Hans Willem Bentinck (1649-1709), first earl of Portland in 1688 by either William III or Mary II.

<sup>44</sup> I am grateful to Derek Adlam, Curator of the Portland Collection, for providing me with information regarding the history and provenance of this earring and for alerting me to the existence of the supporting manuscript document.



Figure 1.4: King Charles I's earring; pearl, gold, and enamel; before 1649. Portland Collection inventory number 005669.

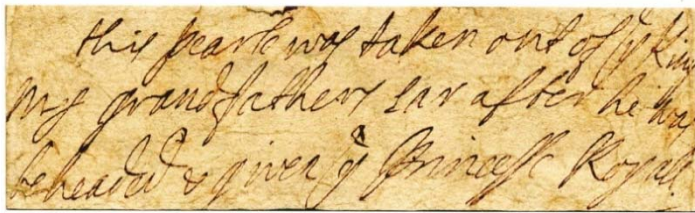


Figure 1.5: Manuscript note written by Mary II; late-seventeenth century. Portland Collection inventory number 005669e.

Another ring from the wreck of the *Girona* demonstrates the levels of complexity involved in gendering ownership and use of jewellery. This ring is formed of a hand holding a heart and an open belt-clasp, and contains the inscription 'NO TENGO MAS QVE DAR TE' (I have nothing more to give you) (fig.1.6).



Figure 1.6: Gold ring with a buckle and hand clasping a heart at the bezel, inscribed to the outer face in Roman capitals; Spanish; sixteenth century. National Museums Northern Ireland, BGR 6 (Ulster Museum).

Its symbolism and the overt statement engraved on the hoop, combined with the fact that it was discovered in the remains of an all-male environment, suggest that this ring was given by

a woman to her lover before he set sail for England.<sup>45</sup> But had such a ring been found in any other context, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 6, it would be plausible to suppose that this was a token of betrothal given by a man to his future bride. Both, of course, could be true. This could be something given by a man to his beloved and then returned for any range of reasons: from the death of a spouse or as a memorial given to the traveller.

But rather than see this as an insoluble problem, this thesis is interested precisely in these gendered transitions and contexts. Jewellery is not intrinsic in its gender. It acquires its associations from the body to which it is attached and the manner in which it is given and received. Thus this dissertation looks at both how jewels were used to adorn the male body and how those encounters and interactions with jewellery, such as commissioning, ownership, and the bequests and gifts of jewels, involved men. Gifts can be considered either as love tokens, such as posy rings inscribed with amorous messages, or in the case of royal gifts they may have been more politically motivated. For example, in 1577 the Spanish ambassador reported that Robert Dudley (1532-1588), earl of Leicester had given Elizabeth I a jewel that depicted her seated on a throne with Mary, Queen of Scots (1542-1587) enchained at her feet, France and Spain submerged by waves, and 'Neptune and the rest of them bowing to this Queen'.<sup>46</sup>

The culture of gift-giving involves reciprocity, for it is impossible to be a giver without the existence of a receiver to take the gift, just as a receiver needs a giver in order to receive.<sup>47</sup> No gift of any sort was given or received without the constraints of social obligation. To give was seen as a 'declaration of intent to request a favour', while to receive led to the 'exposure to the acceptance of requests'.<sup>48</sup> The movement of gifts was bi-directional: flowing downwards, to echo the Aristotelian virtue of liberality; and upwards,

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<sup>45</sup> Sténuit, *Treasures*, p.13.

<sup>46</sup> Elizabeth Jenkins, *Elizabeth and Leicester* (London, 1972), p.200 cited in Arnold, "Sweet England's Jewels", p.39.

<sup>47</sup> In her unpublished doctoral thesis Sarah Bercusson examines the gift-giving of three female Hapsburg consorts at their respective Italian courts in the sixteenth century and writes that 'Dependency in exchange for gifts and privileges is the key to understanding the complications innate in the construction and maintenance of the female court' – Sarah Bercusson, "Gift-Giving, Consumption and the Female Court in Sixteenth-Century Italy", Queen Mary, University of London, unpublished PhD thesis, 2009, p.122, see also pp.17-18, 139-40. For more on gift-giving see Marcel Mauss, *Essai sur le don. Forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques* (1925); and Arjun Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things. Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). For literature specifically on the early modern period see Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Gift in Sixteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Felicity Heal, "Food Gifts, the Household and the Politics of Exchange in Early Modern England", *Past and Present*, 199.1 (2008), 41-70; and Martha C. Howell *Commerce before Capitalism in Europe, 1300-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp.145-207.

<sup>48</sup> Peter Burke, "Renaissance Jewels in Their Social Setting" in *Princely Magnificence: Court Jewels of the Renaissance, 1500-1630*, 8-11 (London: Debrett's Peerage Ltd, 1980), p.11.

which may have been more politically motivated. Opportunities for the giving of gifts were often linked to the life cycle (including christenings, coronations, and weddings), as well as state visits and royal progresses. One occasion above all others provided the nobility and courtiers with a reason to offer gifts to the English monarch, and that was New Year. Research for this thesis has led to an examination of the giving of rings by those admitted to the degree of serjeant-at-law, amongst other examples, and how this act of giving maintained strict social hierarchies, while at the same time forging homosocial bonds.

### 1.5 Historiography and approaches

Until recently, the study of Renaissance jewellery has often been seen as a very narrow, specialist field with the objects often being considered as relatively frivolous or even, as one historian termed it, becoming ‘petty and purposeless’.<sup>49</sup> While clothing and textiles have been taken seriously by economic and social historians, as well as art historians, the study of jewellery has not benefited from the same critical, contextual approach. Renaissance jewellery has traditionally been studied through the eyes of the connoisseur, with issues of dating, provenance, and stylistic categorisation prioritised. While this is important, it rarely considers the social relationships that objects are able to generate.

The value of using objects as source material is beginning to be better understood by historians, art historians, and literary historians alike, as they acknowledge the utility of balancing their traditional documentary, iconographical, and textual approaches with the use of the visual and the material.<sup>50</sup> One such example is the discussion by the historian Kate Lowe of a painting by Jan Mostaert (fl. c.1475-1555/6) entitled *Portrait of a Moor*. Lowe uses this painting to address issues of the stereotyping of black Africans in Renaissance Europe, for the individual represented ‘outwardly conformed to Renaissance European expectations of nobility’.<sup>51</sup> This conclusion has been reached by considering, amongst other

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<sup>49</sup> Joan Evans as cited in Arnold, "Sweet England's Jewels", p.39.

<sup>50</sup> This can be seen in discussions of jewels in relation to their magical or medicinal properties, through the symbolic associations of precious stones and materials. For example, the protective quality of coral made it suitable to be worn as beads or pendants by children, while often the backs of settings for gemstones were left open to maintain contact with the skin (see British Museum P&E 1858,6-28.1 for a sixteenth to early seventeenth-century silver ring set with a ‘toadstone’ and with an open back). Equally, pomanders and perfumed buttons and rosary beads are discussed in relation to health and hygiene in the Renaissance. See Elizabeth Rodini, "The Language of Stones", *Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies*, 25, no. 2, Renaissance Jewelry in the Alsdorf Collection (2000): 16-28, 104, pp.25-26; and Sandra Cavallo, "Health, Beauty and Hygiene" in *At Home in Renaissance Italy*, edited by Marta Ajmar-Wollheim and Flora Dennis, 174-187 (London: V&A Publications, 2006), pp.184-87.

<sup>51</sup> Kate Lowe, "The Stereotyping of Black Africans in Renaissance Europe" in *Black Africans in Renaissance Europe*, edited by T.F Earle and Kate Lowe, 17-47 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p.44.

things, aspects of his dress and other bodily adornment, in particular the gold hat ornament.<sup>52</sup> An interdisciplinary approach that combines more formal historical approaches with material culture studies will allow for a more complete understanding of the meaning of jewels.

Dress history has also proved an important line of investigation, particularly when considering those small dress embellishments such as buttons, hooks, clasps, aglets, and tags. These small items are traditionally considered in the context of dress, as Maria Hayward demonstrated recently in her 2007 publication *Dress at the Court of Henry VIII*. Hayward devotes a section of the book to jewellery but dress embellishments are addressed elsewhere in her work, both as a distinct category and tangentially when looking at the clothing itself. For example, an early sixteenth-century doublet is described in the following manner:

A doublet of purpull sylver tynsell maylyd the foreslevys and placard garnysshed with fyvtie and thre dyamundys set in gold and with roullys of perle to the same doublet every Roulle havynge thre perles set in gold, a hundryth and twelve/the brest being botonyd with twelfe botons of gold blake Inamyld.<sup>53</sup>

It is perhaps not surprising that these dress accessories have been thought of in terms of textiles and clothing, considering that very often they appear under entries of clothing within inventories.<sup>54</sup> Of particular interest to this research in this account are the twelve gold buttons with black enamel and the jewels with fifty-three diamonds and pearls set in gold. Mentioned as an integral part of the doublet, objects such as these (along with hooks and clasps) were in fact removable and transferable to different items of clothing. That they were not considered solely as a part of dress and did in fact constitute the goldsmith's craft can be deduced from a brief survey of the Wardens' Accounts and Court Minutes of the Goldsmiths' Company.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> A silver version of this hat ornament (British Museum, P&E 1847,8-29.1), with the same iconography, was discovered recently and exhibited in the exhibition 'Shakespeare: Staging the World' held at the British Museum in 2012. See Jonathan Bate and Dora Thornton, *Shakespeare: Staging the World* (London: The British Museum Press, 2012), fig.10, p.180.

<sup>53</sup> British Library Royal MS 7.F.XIV, f.124r cited in Hayward, *Dress*, p.100.

<sup>54</sup> For example the 'white sattin dublett unlaced cut and raced with flowers and silver buttons' in the 1614 inventory of Henry Howard – Evelyn Philip Shirley, "An Inventory of the Effects of Henry Howard, K.G., Earl of Northampton, Taken on His Death in 1614, Together with a Transcript of His Will", *Archaeologica* 42, no. II (1869): 347-78, p.367. See also examples in David Starkey, ed., *The Inventory of King Henry VIII. Society of Antiquaries MS 129 and British Library MS Harley 1419. Volume I: The Transcript* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers for Society of Antiquaries London, 1998) and Maria Hayward, ed., *The 1542 Inventory of Whitehall: The Palace and Its Keeper*, 2 vols. (London: Illuminata Publishers for the Society of Antiquaries of London, 2004). This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

<sup>55</sup> I am grateful to Dr David Mitchell of the Institute of Historical Research, University of London for introducing me to these records on 6 May 2009.

Amongst these records, that also note freedoms and apprentices, are listed fines imposed following the submission (or seizure) of substandard goods to the Company.<sup>56</sup> For example, on 25 May 1567 the Wardens of the Company received two shillings from Thomas Pope as payment of a fine for a ‘claspe for a cloke’ that was forty-four penny weights below standard.<sup>57</sup> In a period when the precious metal content accounted for the majority of the cost of wares, the importance of honesty with manufacture cannot be underestimated. Every goldsmith’s shop had a set of weights and the price of the item to be bought would be balanced against the weights to ensure against fraudulent practice (see fig.2.6). The price would then be subject to the cost of fashioning.<sup>58</sup> In a passage referring to the making of a wedding ring, the Elizabethan composer Thomas Whythorne recounts this practice in his autobiography:

When I had given order to my goldsmith for the making of the ring, with the bigness of her finger, and had received of him a counterpane or weight of the gold, I agreed with him to have the ring made by the fourth day after [...] I went to my goldsmith’s for the ring. For the making whereof when I had paid him, and saw that the weight thereof agreed with my counterpane and weight aforesaid, I brought the ring unto my widow.<sup>59</sup>

The records of fines from the Goldsmiths’ Company indicate that these smaller goods, such as pins and clasps, are far more numerous than larger wares, such as casting bottles and other items of plate. This suggests that craftsmen perhaps thought it easier to deceive customers with smaller items of substandard weight than larger ones. It also demonstrates that the Company deemed it worthwhile to regulate these small-scale items, indicating that substantial quantities were sold in the market.

Reconnecting jewels to men’s clothing is a crucial element of this dissertation. Thus incorporating dress history, a relatively new field in the general area of history, is essential for considering both these dress embellishments and conventional jewellery. Changing fashions in dress impacted greatly on fashions for jewels; of equal importance is the understanding of how clothing and jewels interacted with one another. For example, it is

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<sup>56</sup> For a brief discussion of this, see Dora Thornton and David Mitchell, "Three Tudor Silver Dress-Hooks", *The Antiquaries Journal*, 83, (2003): 486-491, p.490.

<sup>57</sup> "Wardens’ Accounts and Court Minutes", Goldsmiths’ Company, K-L 1566-7 ELIZ to 1573-14 ELIZ, vol. 9, f.354. With silver there are 20 penny weights to the ounce and 24 grams to each penny weight, therefore in this instance the clasp weighed just over two ounces less than it should have done.

<sup>58</sup> John S. Forbes, *Hallmark: A History of the London Assay Office* (London: Unicorn Press and the Goldsmiths’ Company, 1999), p.31.

<sup>59</sup> Thomas Whythorne, *The Autobiography of Thomas Whythorne*, edited by James M. Osborn (London: Oxford University Press, 1962) pp.159-60.

useful to know that a trend for low necklines provided a convenient site for the wearing of necklaces and collars, while high necklines enabled the wearer to conceal jewels of a personal nature, whether they be showing certain political allegiances or simply acting as a token of a forbidden love.<sup>60</sup> In addition to the cut of clothing, colour proves to be significant. Black fabric was the most expensive in the fifteenth century and thus was the exclusive reserve of the rich and powerful.<sup>61</sup> More than this, however, is that the colour acted as an excellent foil for the sort of jewellery worn by the most elite members of society.

Bonnet of blake velvet garnysshyd with eight grett balessys set in gold and syxtene flowers of gold with four perlys in every flower and a grett owche of gold with a gret balasse and other small small dyamundes set in hyt also garnysshyd with fyve perlys and oon grett perle hangyng at hyt.<sup>62</sup>

The types of jewels mentioned in the above description are not usually mentioned in the literature on jewellery and it is telling that it is the distinguished dress historian Janet Arnold who references such objects in an exhibition catalogue devoted to Renaissance court jewellery.<sup>63</sup>

The literature on jewellery for the early modern period, broadly speaking, is concerned either with courtly jewels or archaeological material and it often comprises general surveys or object specific discussions.<sup>64</sup> This clear separation of jewellery along lines of materiality is anachronistic, for it creates a division that did not exist for contemporaries. Such approaches also engender false hierarchies that elevate courtly jewels above their base metal equivalents. While this was certainly true when issues of sale or the value a jewel could achieve when pawned were under consideration, the division was not as great for other non-monetary meanings. This thesis argues that the wearing, owning, and circulating of jewels had meaning for men in the early modern period regardless of whether a jewel was made of gold and studded with precious gemstones or more simply cast from copper-alloy.

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<sup>60</sup> Hayward, *Dress*, p.118.

<sup>61</sup> Hayward, *Dress*, p.81.

<sup>62</sup> British Library Royal MS 7.F.XIV, f.124r., cited in Hayward, *Dress*, p.112.

<sup>63</sup> See Arnold, "Sweet England's Jewels", pp.35-37 for a description of the use of jewels such as carcans, biliments, flowers, buttons, etc.

<sup>64</sup> For example *Princely Magnificence: Court Jewels of the Renaissance, 1500-1630*; Harold Clifford Smith, *Jewellery* (London: Meuthen, 1908); Evans, *History*; Adrien Goetz and Claudette Joannis, *Jewels in the Louvre* (Paris: Musee de Louvre Editions & Flammarion, 2008); Yvonne Hackenbroch, *Renaissance Jewellery* (London: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1979); Diana Scarisbrick, *Tudor and Jacobean Jewellery* (London: Tate Publishing, 1995); Geoff Egan, *Material Culture in London in an Age of Transition, Tudor and Stuart Period Finds c.1450-c.1700* (London: MoLAS, 2005); Geoff Egan and Frances Pritchard, *Dress Accessories c.1150-c.1450. Medieval Finds from Excavations in London*, vol. 3 (London: H.M.S.O., 1991); Diana Scarisbrick, *Rings: Symbols of Wealth Power and Affection* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1993); Hackenbroch, *Enseignes*.



Hugh Tait's edited publication *7000 Years of Jewellery* (1986), based on the holdings of the British Museum, discusses jewellery from all over the world and spans a period of seven thousand years but it is too general in nature.<sup>65</sup> It cannot hope to achieve more than provide an informative narrative picked up through the objects illustrated. Joan Evans, although appearing to offer an equally wide subject matter, is quite unapologetic in limiting the geographical area to those 'more civilised parts of Europe'. She does this to make clear the distinction of jewels borne out of the artistic tradition (and therefore as a decorative art) from those that are of a tribal tradition.<sup>66</sup>

Other literature on jewellery is focused more precisely on the objects themselves, with authoritative and important works such as Yvonne Hackenbroch's *Enseignes* (1996) or Diana Scarisbrick's publications on rings.<sup>67</sup> This approach allows for close analysis of a particular object type, though it perhaps removes them from their wider social, visual, and material context. While Hackenbroch provides an excellent and unparalleled visual repository of Renaissance emblematic hat ornaments, her work focuses more on the subjects and themes depicted on these jewels than on their material nature. Scarisbrick's work *Jewellery in Britain* (1994) is one of the few works to situate jewellery in its historical, social, and literary narrative.<sup>68</sup>

Marcia Pointon's recent publication *Brilliant Effects* (2009) focuses on England from the seventeenth to the late-nineteenth centuries and is exemplary in its interdisciplinary approach, providing a model for this study.<sup>69</sup> She is unapologetic in her rejection of providing a study of style or authorship; rather she sees jewels as a product of their culture, stating that they 'play a part in historical contingency and contribute to shaping understanding of the past and present'.<sup>70</sup> Pointon establishes two points within her introduction, which mark a clear shift from empirical studies: 'the ideological importance of jewels and their imagery in cultural formations' and how gemstones and jewels 'generate meanings that are not necessarily readily accessed by traditional iconographic tools'.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Hugh Tait, ed., *7000 Years of Jewellery*, 3rd ed (London: The British Museum Press, 2008 (repr.)).

<sup>66</sup> Evans, *History*, pp.39-40.

<sup>67</sup> Hackenbroch, *Enseignes*; Scarisbrick, *Rings* (1993); Diana Scarisbrick, *Rings: Jewelry of Power, Love and Loyalty* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2007); Diana Scarisbrick and Martin Henig, *Finger Rings; From Ancient to Modern* (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2003); Diana Scarisbrick and Takayuki Toyama, *Historic Rings: Four Thousand Years of Craftsmanship* (Tokyo and London: Kodansha International, 2004).

<sup>68</sup> Diana Scarisbrick, *Jewellery in Britain 1066-1837: A Documentary, Social, Literary and Artistic Survey* (Norwich: Michael Russell, 1994).

<sup>69</sup> Marcia Pointon, *Brilliant Effects: A Cultural History of Gem Stones and Jewellery* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009).

<sup>70</sup> Pointon, *Brilliant Effects*, p.2.

<sup>71</sup> Pointon, *Brilliant Effects*, p.2.

More recently Charlotte Gere and Judy Rudoe have published their research on jewellery within the Victorian period.<sup>72</sup> Like Pointon, this work draws upon years of research by both authors and does not focus exclusively on masterpiece jewels of the era; instead their aim was to understand ‘how the Victorians used jewellery and what it meant to them, both literally and metaphorically’.<sup>73</sup> In rhetoric similar to that of this thesis, the authors acknowledge that ‘Jewellery affected all classes and conditions in Victorian society and had significance beyond that of mere personal adornment, fashion or intrinsic value’.<sup>74</sup> Subjects covered include the symbolic weight of jewellery, the tension between status and fashion, the relationship of jewellery to dress, and the different messages conveyed by jewellery.<sup>75</sup> Research for this thesis aligns itself firmly with this new scholarship, locating English jewellery of the early modern period within an interpretive framework in a manner comparable to that of Pointon, Gere, and Rudoe. By encompassing social, historical, and literary narratives this thesis will also provide a critical analysis on the role that men had to play in the consumption of jewels.

## 1.6 Methodology and sources

As stated above, research for this thesis has been undertaken within the context of an AHRC-funded Collaborative Doctoral Award between Queen Mary, University of London and the British Museum. The aim of the project was to provide a more contextual understanding for the jewellery collections of the department of Prehistory and Europe, which form the core material evidence. In addition, working within a museum environment has allowed me to work closely with curators and with makers and to consider how to display results through exhibitions, as well as through the dissertation itself. In the second year of research, my supervisors and I devised a project which allowed us to engage directly with practising silversmiths and jewellers. The practitioners would work with Tudor and Stuart jewellery from the British Museum to understand the social and historical importance of these objects, in order to create modern interpretations of men’s jewellery that reflected contemporary male preoccupations. The resulting six creations were displayed in Room 46 of the British Museum from 11 November 2011 until 30 January 2012.<sup>76</sup> Working with makers, alongside the objects, has supported this research and it has served as a reminder that object-based

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<sup>72</sup> Charlotte Gere and Judy Rudoe, *Jewellery in the Age of Queen Victoria: A Mirror to the World* (London: British Museum Press, 2010).

<sup>73</sup> Gere and Rudoe, *Jewellery*, p.7.

<sup>74</sup> Gere and Rudoe, *Jewellery*, p.82.

<sup>75</sup> Gere and Rudoe, *Jewellery*, p.9.

<sup>76</sup> The display was called ‘Inspired: contemporary views of Renaissance jewellery’. See Appendix E.

research must not only consider the material form from a single perspective of the wearer but also needs to consider commissioning and manufacture.

The medieval historian and collector Dame Joan Evans (1893-1977) observed quite accurately that jewellery is ultimately designed to be worn.<sup>77</sup> Working with material evidence, of any nature, requires close handling and observation and this cannot be achieved by observing the artefacts through the glass of a museum display case. Nevertheless, even the most thorough and in-depth handling session is not able to bring the observer any closer to a true sense of the relationship between the object and contemporary user. This becomes ever more apparent in the case of jewellery. Without being positioned on the human body, the jewels become static. Without interaction with other jewels and clothing, an individual piece loses its visual impact. Moreover, jewels function in a manner that speaks to both the wearer and the viewer. Close readings of an object allow the design historian a starting point from which to begin locating the piece geographically, spatially, and temporally. By asking a number of questions of the object, it is then possible to begin identifying the primary and secondary source material that will provide answers of a social and cultural nature, to then determine a narrative.

The dress historian Janet Arnold, in her publication *A Handbook of Costume* (1973), discusses this methodology in relation to dress.<sup>78</sup> Such questions can be adapted accordingly, when presented with different object types or different media. An obvious starting point is to ask 'what is it?'. Often this may prove to be the most problematic of all lines of enquiry, for there is a tendency to apply one's own perceptions based on personal experience when presented with material evidence. The historian Jules David Prown recognises that this 'cultural perspective' is an obstacle to surmount – 'The evidence we study is the product of a particular cultural environment. We, the interpreters, are products of a different cultural environment.'<sup>79</sup> In the essay 'Mind in Matter', Prown proposes a model that can be applied to the analysis of artefacts in order to overcome these 'cultural biases'. There are three stages to this methodology that must be carried out independently of one another and in the following order: description, deduction, and speculation. Applicable to any artefact, regardless of its time, place or type, any number of questions may be asked at each stage, making this method a clear development from Arnold's attempt, which focused exclusively on dress. By adhering to Prown's rules, at the primary stage of description it is necessary to ensure that 'subjective

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<sup>77</sup> Evans, *History*, p.9.

<sup>78</sup> Janet Arnold, *A Handbook of Costume* (London: Macmillan, 1973), pp.11-12.

<sup>79</sup> Jules David Prown, "Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method", *Winterthur Portfolio*, 17, no. 1 (1982): 1-19, p.4.

assumptions or conclusions derived from other experience' do not influence the observation.<sup>80</sup> This is crucial, particularly when attempting to define an artefact by assigning a name to it.

A gold, emerald-set jewel formerly in the collection of the department of Prehistory and Europe at the British Museum provides a case in point for the importance of beginning with the object itself (fig.1.7).



Figure 1.7: Gold and emerald turban-ornament; central India; seventeenth century. British Museum, Asia AF.2954.

Considered solely on the evidence of stylistic attributes, the object had been placed amongst other emerald-set jewels that had been assigned to the British Museum's European collections. Following a loan request for this piece, I worked with colleagues to determine its origins with more precision. Despite having been within a European context since its arrival at the British Museum in 1897, Susan Stronge of the Victoria and Albert Museum and Richard Blurton of the department of Asia at the British Museum both recognised a technique used in the setting of the gemstones as the *kundan* technique, which is uniquely Indian.<sup>81</sup> The asymmetrical nature of the jewel suggests that it was to be worn on the turban and that it is one of a pair. This turban-ornament has now been relocated to the department of Asia and its catalogue record has been updated to reflect its now-agreed Indian provenance. Without this new assignation, the jewel would have been linked to a European historical and social context and false narrative would have been created. Curatorial experience has proved essential in making these first categorisations that then allow us to provide an appropriate historical context.

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<sup>80</sup> Prown, "Mind in Matter", p.7.

<sup>81</sup> Personal correspondence with Susan Stronge and Richard Blurton in September 2007. For a description of the *kundan* technique, see Oppi Untracht, *Traditional Jewelry of India* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997), pp.366-67.

Curatorial and archaeological expertise have proved essential in other ways as well. The Treasure Act of 1996 requires the reporting of metal-detector finds that have a precious metal content of at least ten percent and are more than three hundred years old. Since the implementation of this Act on 24 September 1997, there has been a clear increase in the number of these small-scale artefacts which are now known to historians. The obligation to report these finds has supported scholarship in this field of research. For the growing number of precious-metal dress embellishments, which vary in the manufacturing and decorative techniques applied to them, shows how ubiquitous such items were in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. While portraiture provides evidence of rulers and members of the aristocracy ornately embellished with gold buttons, hooks, clasps and buckles, the physical evidence is brought to light through the Treasure Act. These reported finds also provide evidence for the wearing of less costly examples in silver and silver-gilt. Archaeological excavations, finds from unstratified contexts on the Thames foreshore, and chance finds reported through the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) provide similar examples of base-metal, demonstrating that the importance of jewels permeated all strata of society.

Central to this research are the jewels themselves but they must not only be read through the eyes of a curator or an art historian, for focussing purely either on iconographical approaches or identification can be limiting.<sup>82</sup> Jewels are in danger of being read in isolation, rather than considered as part of the whole of which they constitute. This thesis aims to integrate curatorial knowledge with an historical approach by adopting the techniques used in material culture studies. By adapting the techniques of Arnold from dress to jewellery, the objects that are the focus of this study can be placed within social contexts. From this, the significance of all jewels can be understood, whether of high-end production as usually found in museum displays, or those lower quality wares that are discovered in archaeological contexts. By incorporating contemporary views on masculinity, this thesis demonstrates how jewels supported alternative meanings of what it meant to be a man in early modern England.<sup>83</sup>

In addition to the object-based evidence, a variety of sources have been employed for the purposes of this research: portraiture, and other visual imagery; literary sources mostly in the form of plays; contemporary treatises; and historical documents, such as marriage

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<sup>82</sup> A one-time curatorial approach characterised by identification and ideas of connoisseurship is now changing with curators such as John Cherry, Dora Thornton, and Hazel Forsyth (amongst others) applying multi-disciplinary approaches to object-based research.

<sup>83</sup> For a thorough discussion of how alternative forms of manhood could be expressed in early modern England for those excluded from patriarchal forms of masculinity, see Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*.

depositions, state papers, wills, and inventories. Each of these has their own interpretive problems. Archival documents are often only snap-shots of history at a single point in time and literary materials have to be considered within their own rhetorical traditions. Nonetheless, by bringing together surviving objects that are stored away within museum drawers, those found in the ground and the written, visual, and performative materials from the period, this thesis aims to reconnect Renaissance and early modern Englishmen with their most valued possessions.

## 1.7 Thesis structure

The first section of this thesis focuses on two means by which men within the sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries had access to jewels: purchasing and ownership. Chapter 2 looks at the purchasing experience focusing on the regulation of the trade and the places in which purchases were made. Chapter 3 looks more closely at the ownership of the jewels of men from very different social classes. Henry VIII's possessions are indicative of royal ownership, while William Herbert (1506/7-1570), first earl of Pembroke, and Henry Howard (1540-1614) both represent the courtly elite. The inventory of Lord Mayor of London, Sir Thomas Ramsey (d.1590), provides an example of ownership amongst urban citizens, while a survey of the inventories of inhabitants from the town of Ipswich gives insight into what ordinary men of early modern England outside of a large urban context might own. This material is supported further by information from the wills of ordinary London citizens.<sup>84</sup> Evidence from these inventories and wills is presented to examine the quantity and quality of the jewels men owned and demonstrate that at all levels of society men owned jewels.

The second section focuses primarily on the objects themselves to consider the relationship between dress and jewels. Within this section, which deals with items affixed to clothing, attention is paid not only to those ornaments at the high-end of production but consideration will also be given to base-metal examples, in order to establish how the desire to adorn permeated all degrees of society. Finds that have been reported through the Treasure Act (1996) will be incorporated within this section. Chapter 4 examines buttons, hooks and dress fastenings, with a particular focus on buttons. These small-scale objects were ubiquitous throughout the early modern period.<sup>85</sup> Chapter 5 looks at a jewel that was

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<sup>84</sup> Ida Darlington, ed., *London Consistory Court Wills 1492-1547* (London: London Record Society, 1967).

<sup>85</sup> See, for example, the records of objects lost from the clothing of Queen Elizabeth on her progresses between 1561 and 1585 or the records of finds from the Thames foreshore: Janet Arnold, *'Lost From her Majesty's*

primarily for male use: the hat ornament. Established by Hackenbroch in her 1996 monograph as a distinct object type worthy of attention, this item of jewellery has for the most part only been discussed for its iconographical importance. By also considering those smaller ornaments worn on the hat or cap, this chapter will seek to see these objects as constituting ideals of masculinity and ornamentation.

The third section addresses how jewels could be used to mark social bonds. The patterns of circulation of jewels were indicative of the relationships that a man formed in his lifetime. With a focus on different types of rings, this section examines how the same category of object could be used to form different types of relationships. The ring's use and meaning in the wedding ceremony is analysed in Chapter 6 to understand the most basic of male-female contractual relations. Marriage in the early modern period was a complex process that was difficult to define. It was subject to ambiguity and confusion, even amongst contemporaries. Evidence from marriage depositions and the autobiography of the Elizabethan musician Thomas Whythorne will be presented alongside rings inscribed with posies (considered to be those used at the contracting of a marriage) to unpack and add a new dimension to the study of early modern marriages. The role of the man in this exchange is considered and the nature of the inscriptions is analysed to give a more rounded insight into this important social ritual. The development and maintenance of homosocial relations can also be traced through jewellery. In Chapter 7 the focus is on the rings presented by newly created serjeants-at-law, to demonstrate how networks of friendship and duty were maintained. In examining this area, ideas of strict hierarchies that were in place in the early modern period will be clearly highlighted. Chapter 8 looks at signet rings, with a particular focus on a group given by the London merchant Sir Thomas Gresham to his friends: the Gresham grasshopper rings. The section closes with a chapter on mourning rings. In a lifetime an individual may have been in receipt of a vast number of such rings. Two gold chocolate cups in the British Museum formed from about twenty mourning rings that were melted down in about 1700 suggests an ingenious solution of how to deal with these objects that reflected social bonds but were probably rarely, if ever, actually worn.

The final, concluding chapter looks at memorialisation and male lineage through the last will and testament of the statesman Sir Thomas Sackville (c.1536-1608), first earl of

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*Back': Items of Clothing and Jewels Lost or Given Away by Queen Elizabeth between 1561 and 1585, Entered in one of the Day Books Kept for the Records of the Wardrobe of Robes* (The Costume Society, 1980); Brian Read, *Metal Buttons, c. BC 900-1700 AD* (Langport: Portcullis Publishing, 2005); Brian Read, *Hooked-Clasps & Eyes: A Classification & Catalogue of Sharp- or Blunt-Hooked Clasps & Miscellaneous Objects with Hooks, Eyes, Loops, Rings or Toggles* (Langport: Portcullis Publishing, 2008).

Dorset. It focuses on bequests of certain jewels to his wife Cicely (d.1615) and heir Robert Sackville (1560/1-1609), second earl of Dorset. The making of memory is a fundamental aspect of this, to ascertain what resonance bequests of jewels had for descendents. There were instances when jewels were not mentioned in wills, apart to grant permission to executors for their sale. While there is an emotional bond with jewellery, it is hard to ignore that jewels could be translated easily into hard cash. If not melted down for their financial value, jewels were often remodelled according to changing fashions. The thesis closes with a discussion of the Lyte Jewel.

## 1.8 Conclusion

This thesis is designed to reposition jewellery on the male body. In the crudest sense, jewellery constituted nothing more than wearable and portable cash. This aspect has been mentioned above in relation to the gold chains found within the contexts of shipwrecks. The weights of the individual links that corresponded to the escudo coins found in the wreck of the *Atocha* suggested strongly that this was one purpose of such chains. A sixteenth-century source provides explicit confirmation of this, revealing further information of how payment was made to men on board ships. In his narrative letter Captain de Cuellar, a survivor from a wreck of the Spanish Armada, describes his treatment once he had reached land, revealing at the same time the significance of the chain he wore.

The old man began stripping me as far as my shirt, beneath which I was wearing a gold chain worth more than a thousand reals [...] I was only a poor soldier and this money was what I had earned on board ship.<sup>86</sup>

Yet, this thesis will show that in the early modern period jewels did mean more to their owners, across all social groups, than their intrinsic value alone. By exploring the significance of jewels to men in Renaissance and early modern England, this thesis will show how these items of jewellery had far greater resonance than simple ornamentation or the ability to pull off a link to make a payment.

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<sup>86</sup> Evelyn Hardy, *Survivors of the Armada* (London: Constable, 1966), p.67.



## **Section 1**

### **Gendered jewels: acquisition and ownership**

Jewels are produced from neutral objects. Made from precious and non-precious metals and gemstones or their imitations, their individual elements are bought and sold without reference to masculinity or femininity. Gendered associations are acquired through a social context. Some were given special meanings due to their associations with magical, healing, or protective properties; others were associated with particular social rituals. In his lifetime, an Englishman, even one of modest means, might have owned decorative items for his clothing or buy a ring to give to his betrothed. He might have been given a small-scale object in silver or silver-gilt as a gift or as a bequest or have bought a second-hand gilt decoration for his cap from a pedlar.

This section focuses on how men within the early modern period commissioned or bought jewels and attempts to identify the range of items that men from different social groups might own and why. Chapter 2 looks at the purchasing experience for men, opening with an examination of their main suppliers – goldsmiths and their trade – before going on to explore where and how purchases of both ready-made and specially commissioned pieces could take place.

Chapter 3 looks at the jewels that men from different social groups actually owned. The 1547 inventory of Henry VIII (r.1509-1547) is an example of ownership at the highest level within England; the 1561 inventory of William Herbert, first earl of Pembroke (1506/7–1570), and the inventory of Henry Howard (1540-1614), Lord Privy Seal, dated to 1614 provide information on elite ownership; an understanding of the urban citizen is provided through the will of the merchant Sir Thomas Ramsey (d.1590), Lord Mayor of London in 1577; whilst the published wills and inventories of London and Ipswich citizens, respectively, are used as a group to understand the habits of men of lower social groups.

## Chapter 2

### Acquiring jewellery

#### 2.1 Accessing precious materials



Figure 2.1: Cast gold ingot from the Salcombe Cannon Site; probably Moroccan; seventeenth century. British Museum, Middle East 1999,12-7.450.

A cast ingot made of North African gold was purchased by the British Museum in 1999 as part of a group of over four hundred coins, broken pieces of gold jewellery and ingots, as well as items of pewter, pottery fragments, and a merchant's seal. These objects were recovered from an underwater site in Salcombe Bay, Devon by a group of divers. While the ship has never been found the numismatic evidence suggests that the finds originated in seventeenth-century Morocco. It has been suggested that the fragmentary nature of the jewellery and ingots is indicative of bullion destined for England that would then have been melted down and used for coinage, plate, or jewellery.<sup>1</sup>

As this suggests, the first issue for any man who wanted a piece of jewellery made to his specifications was how to obtain the basic ingredients that were needed. Even if this only involved the purchase of silver-gilt buttons or aglets, the buyer needed a good knowledge of where to go and whom to trust. He either had to have direct access to gold, silver, and gemstones himself, be able to purchase a ready-made item, or know a reliable source. He might use this knowledge on his own behalf or, as was common, on behalf of other friends and relations, particularly women who had fewer opportunities for public market negotiations and purchases.

In his autobiography, the sixteenth-century composer Thomas Whythorne (1528-1596) recounted his dealings with a goldsmith whom he commissioned to make a wedding ring noting that it was to be made of 'old gold'.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Venetia Porter, "Coins of the Sa'dian Sharifs of Morocco Off the Coast of Devon. Preliminary Report", 1288-1294, Volume II of Proceedings of the XII. Internationaler Numismatischer Kongress, Berlin, 1997 (Berlin, 2000), p.1288; see also Venetia Porter and Patricia Morison, "The Salcombe Bay Treasure", *British Museum Magazine*, Spring 1998, 16-17.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Whythorne, *The Autobiography of Thomas Whythorne*, edited by James M. Osborn (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p.159. This source will be dealt with more extensively within Chapter 6.

She [the widow] went unto her chest and fetched out of it as much old gold as was worth nigh about a mark; the which she said that she would have bestowed in the ring [...] The next day I went to a goldsmith, unto whom I delivered the gold and told him of what fashion I would have the ring made.<sup>3</sup>

This is a more complicated description than it first seems. It could indicate either the use of an old piece of jewellery, or it could refer to the higher standard of angel gold that was used prior to the introduction of a lower standard of gold by Henry VIII (r.1509-1547) in 1526 and the debasement of gold that occurred between 1544 and 1549.<sup>4</sup>

Whichever is the case, this reference is an important reminder that, as stressed above, obtaining the basic materials to make jewellery, even for something as essential as a wedding ring, was not straight forward and that the finished product was often the result of discussions between client and producer. According to the economic historian T.S. Willan, who has researched extensively on trade within the Tudor period, 'the movement of the precious metals is one of the most elusive features of sixteenth-century foreign trade'.<sup>5</sup>

David Humphrey has identified a number of ways in which a goldsmith could obtain his supply of precious materials for his craft: from his client, either new or recycled material; both new and recycled material held as stock; sourced locally and legally by the goldsmith; sourced illegally by the goldsmith; and through a conduit, a middleman, who could provide new and recycled goods.<sup>6</sup> In the case of Whythorne's goldsmith, it is clear that the client supplied the craftsman with the gold required for the ring. Unfortunately, while this anecdote provides evidence for the practice of recycling precious metals, it offers no further information regarding the availability of the other raw materials required by a goldsmith. To understand this, we need to turn to a wider range of sources concerning trade and guild practices.

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<sup>3</sup> Whythorne, *Autobiography*, p.159.

<sup>4</sup> In 1526 Henry VIII introduced the 'crown gold' standard of gold coinage of 22 carats, alongside the existing 'angel gold' at 23 carats 3.5 grains. A 20-carat standard of gold came in during the Great Debasement between 1544 and 1549. Dr Barrie Cook of the British Museum has speculated on whether references to old gold in fact indicate the higher standard of angel gold, though he thinks that such usage for the term is more likely in the years immediately following the introduction of the crown gold standard – "Kings, Coins, and Community, ca.1550-1650", paper given at seminar 'Images at Work: Non-Monetary Uses for Early Modern Coins and Medals', British Museum, London, 2 July 2010 and personal correspondence on 31 August 2012.

<sup>5</sup> T.S. Willan, *Studies in Elizabethan Foreign Trade* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959), pp.299-300.

<sup>6</sup> David Humphrey, "The Trade in Precious Materials to Northern Europe in the Age of Reconnaissance", paper given at study day 'Expressions: Jewellery in the Early Modern Period', British Museum, London, 20 January 2012.

A manuscript image providing a contemporary view of Cheapside, the conduit running through the City of London known for its concentration of trades, particularly goldsmiths, is suggestive of the varied modes of selling (fig.2.2).



Figure 2.2: 'Cheapeside Market' from Hugh Alley, *A Caveatt for the city of London*, dated 1598.<sup>7</sup> Folger Shakespeare Library V.a.318.

A nineteenth-century print copy of a sixteenth-century painting depicting Edward VI (r.1547-1553) passing by the Cheapside Cross on procession to his coronation suggests that goldsmiths did have their own capital, stock, and access to gold (fig.2.3).

<sup>7</sup> Ian Archer, Caroline Barron and Vanessa Harding, *Hugh Alley's Caveat: The Markets of London in 1598. Folger Ms V.A.318* (London: London Topographical Society, 1988), f.15.





Figure 2.3: Print entitled 'Cheapside Cross as it appeared in the Year 1547'; etching; anonymous; British school; 1809. British Museum, Prints & Drawings 1871, 8-12.5223.

As the soon to be crowned king passed through this area of the City of London, known for its concentration of trades, the arcades in the lower ground of the image prominently display larger goldsmiths' wares. A manuscript illumination dated to the preceding century shows the interior of a goldsmith's shop. It suggests that once inside these shops potential buyers, both male and female, would then be able to view the smaller ready-made products of the goldsmith's craft, such as rings and jewelled ornaments (fig.2.4). A fifteenth-century painting by the Dutch artist Petrus Christus (c.1410/20-1475/6) also shows the range of goods produced and sold by a goldsmith (fig.2.5). While both images show that women were able to make purchases for themselves, it would seem that they were not able to do so unaccompanied. However, this thesis is not concerned with female purchasing habits; rather it focuses on the role had by men in transactions concerning the acquisition of jewellery.



Figure 2.4: Interior of a goldsmith's shop with plate and vessels displayed on the upper two shelves behind the counter and smaller jewelled goods on the lower shelf and laid out on the counter for the customers. 'Le jeune page' (The young pageboy) from *Livre des simples médecines*; France; fifteenth century. Bibliothèque National de France, department of Manuscripts Français 9136, f.344.





Figure 2.5: 'A Goldsmith in his Shop, possibly St Eligius'; oil on oak panel; Petrus Christus; 1449. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1975.1.110 (The Robert Lehman Collection).

In the absence of any contemporary English visual sources showing a goldsmith's interior, parallels must be drawn from these European examples to understand better purchasing practices.<sup>8</sup> Certainly the use of a pair of balances and counterweights (visible in the Christus image) was customary in the English trade, as can be deduced from further reading of the Whythorne text. For after discussing the requirements of the commission with the goldsmith, the protagonist informs the reader that he 'received of him a counterpane or weight of the gold'. This is then used when Whythorne returns to the goldsmith a few days later to collect the ring. He describes ascertaining that 'the weight thereof [the ring] agreed with my counterpane and weight aforesaid'.<sup>9</sup> It is not improbable to suppose that the weights and balance used in this transaction would have been similar to an extant seventeenth-century Dutch example (fig.2.6).

<sup>8</sup> See Nancy Cox and Karin Dannehl, *Perceptions of Retailing in Early Modern England* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007), p.29 in which the authors claim that there is no illustrative material of shops existing from before 1700.

<sup>9</sup> Whythorne, *Autobiography*, pp.159-60.



Figure 2.6: Brass coin-weights and hand-balance contained within a wooden box; made by Guilluam de Neve; minted in Amsterdam; 1600-1654. British Museum, Coins & Medals W.3132.

Often, probate inventories relating to an individual involved in a trade give an indication of the tools and implements required by the craftsman. On 24 September 1627 the shop contents of the Bristol goldsmith Humfry Clovill were appraised.

Twoe Anvills att £1 10s.

gold & silver weights, 2 bell weights, 2 pearle weights of 128 ounces a peece, 5 paire of skales for silver, 4 paire of powder skales, one cast, 2 bekernes, one spoone moulde & hammer, one greate sheares, one swaginge hammer, 2 forginge hammers, 4 spoone hammers, one googe hammer, 2 planishinge hammers, 12 drawinge Irons, two greate wedges, one drawinge tonges, one drawinge binche twoe copper boylinge pannes, one brasse pann to make fire In, one brasse Stampe & butterles, one silver Ingnett 3 paire of tongs, one ringe to make fire in, one iron beame & skales. In greate & small weights in lead, one hundred weight, one wheele to twist silver, one guilded bolle, twoe hundred weight of ordinaunce bullets, one deske, one truncke, one Chest with other small tooles about the shop. £6

twoe beakers both weighing 16 ozs 10s.

3 spoones weighing 3 ozs 15s.<sup>10</sup>

In recognising the tools of a craftsman it is possible to understand better the complexities involved in the manufacturing process (such as in the different types of hammers) and the

<sup>10</sup> Edwin George and Stella George, eds., *Bristol Probate Inventories. Part 1: 1542-1650* (Bristol: Bristol Record Society, 2002), no.46, pp.63-64.



types of interaction that could occur between the maker and his client. Not all inventories are so detailed and it is unfortunate that the appraisers of the estate of the single goldsmith amongst the Ipswich inhabitants failed to give detailed descriptions of the shop's contents.<sup>11</sup> The only entry contained for the 'shoppe' is 'A paier of bellowes with other tooles belonging to A gold smithe', all of which are valued at £2 of a total estate worth £9 6s. 8d.<sup>12</sup>

A sixteenth-century woodcut engraving showing the interior of a goldsmith's workshop provides visual evidence of some of the tools listed in Colvill's inventory above and of the techniques used by a goldsmith in this period (fig.2.7). In the foreground a worker is beating a strip of metal with a hammer and at his feet lays a second hammer. Against the right-hand wall are various tools, such as files, knives, and pliers. One man works at the fire and two goldsmiths are chasing and embossing vessels that demonstrate the range of goods with which these artisans worked.



Figure 2.7: The interior of a goldsmith's workshop showing various products, tools, and men embossing and chasing metal vessels, beating a strip of metal, and working at the fire. 'Aurifaber. Der Goldschmit (The Goldsmith)' from *Panoplia omnium illiberalium mechanicarum (Book of Trades)*; print made by Jost Amman; published by Sigmund Feierabend; published in Frankfurt; 1568. British Museum, Prints and Drawings 1904,2-6.103.16.

<sup>11</sup> Michael Reed, ed., *The Ipswich Probate Inventories 1583-1631* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: published by the Boydell Press for the Suffolk Records Society, 1981): the seventy-two inventories cover the dates 1583 to 1631 and are the earliest surviving probate inventories that have been discovered within the archives of the Archdeaconry of Suffolk and the Consistory Court records for the diocese of Norwich.

<sup>12</sup> Reed, ed., *Ipswich Probate Inventories*, p.25.

Returning to the output of a goldsmith, records of payments made on behalf of Robert Dudley (1532-1588), earl of Leicester to certain goldsmiths give an indication of the range of their production. The accounts kept by William Chancy, from 20 December 1558 to 20 September 1559 demonstrate that goldsmiths were paid for supplying not only smaller items such as pearls, gold buttons, and little chains, but also larger goods such as 'white cuppes' of silver.<sup>13</sup> The Christus image also indicates the varied manufacture of goldsmiths and to the right-hand side of the image two flagons and a double-cup sit on the uppermost shelf. Each of these objects is made of silver, with the foot, finial, and lips of the opening of each being additionally gilded.

The practice of recycling old and unwanted goods is also indicated by the accounts kept by another member of Dudley's household, Richard Ellis. Covering the period 1559 to 1561, Ellis records an occasion on which he received 54s. 10d. from Dewes the goldsmith for 'ij smale booles of sylver waing xj oz. iij qtr.' and priced at 4s. 8d. per ounce.<sup>14</sup> Accounts kept by William Blounte of Sir Henry Sidney (1529-1586) from 31 May 1571 to 30 April 1572 show a similar practice. The not insignificant sum of £1036 1s. 6d. was received from the goldsmith known as Mr. Marten 'for the sale of plate' and Edward Hynde paid £24 'for a jewel'.<sup>15</sup> Presumably the transaction suited both parties: Dudley and Sidney were able to dispense of outmoded plate and jewels, gaining capital in the process; the goldsmiths were now in possession of valuable raw materials that could be melted down and remade into wares to sell to other customers. The gemstone may have been reset into plate or a piece of jewellery.

It was also possible to obtain newly minted or mined gold, silver, and gemstones. In the medieval period there was little gold mined within western and central Europe.<sup>16</sup> From the thirteenth century, new mines were being discovered in the Rhine Valley, Silesia, and Bohemia but still supplies of gold from the Arab empire constituted the largest source to the West. According to Humphrey, prior to the discovery of the New World, gold reached Europe from several African sites, the Far East (and was transported via the Silk Route), and

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<sup>13</sup> Simon Adams, ed., *Household Accounts and Disbursement Books of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, 1558-1561, 1584-1586* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp.86, 90, 91.

<sup>14</sup> Adams, ed., *Household Accounts*, p.117.

<sup>15</sup> Charles Lethbridge Kingsford, ed., *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord De L'isle & Dudley Preserved at Penshurst Place*, 6 vols. (London: HMSO, 1925), vol.1, p.246.

<sup>16</sup> Information regarding the availability of gold within the medieval period has been taken from John Cherry, *Goldsmiths* (London: British Museum Press, 1992), pp.18-21.

in limited supplies it was being mined in Bohemia and Hungary. Silver came mostly from the central European mines of Saxony, Freiburg, and Bohemia.<sup>17</sup>

As noted above, the economic historian Willan considered the trade of precious metals to be one of the hardest to trace during the sixteenth century. In his survey of foreign trade during the reign of Elizabeth I, Willan includes a case study on England's trade with Morocco.<sup>18</sup> It emerges that whilst gold was not a legitimate export, some quantities of it was smuggled out of the country, as a list of Moroccan commodities dated to 1561 that placed gold at the top aptly demonstrates.<sup>19</sup> Since gold was not a part of the permissible export trade within the Elizabethan period, it is very difficult to ascertain the extent to which Morocco was a supplier of this metal to England.

The Salcombe Bay treasure described above, discovered in 1995 by a team of amateur divers off the coast of Devon, may provide some indication of how Moroccan gold entered the English market.<sup>20</sup> The majority of the coins and jewels are Moroccan and, while the wreck itself has not been located, it is thought that the vessel may have been travelling to England from Morocco.<sup>21</sup> It is likely that the ship was wrecked in the 1630s or 1640s and that the gold, particularly the broken jewellery, was to be used as bullion. While this discovery relates to the seventeenth century, it would not be hard to imagine that ships with similar cargo were bound for England in the sixteenth century.

One concrete reference to the export of Moroccan gold can be traced back to the partnership formed by Robert Dudley along with his secretary Arthur Atye, Alexander Avenon, and Richard Staper in June 1585.<sup>22</sup> This partnership was established following the foundation of the Barbary Company that same year. The Company was not regulated and therefore did not engage directly with trade; rather it oversaw the trade of its members either as individuals or in partnerships. The passive role played by this company may have been the reason for its eventual demise once its charter expired twelve years later on 5 July 1597.

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<sup>17</sup> Humphrey, "The Trade in Precious Materials", British Museum, 20 January 2012.

<sup>18</sup> Willan, *Elizabethan Foreign Trade*, Chapter 4.

<sup>19</sup> H. de Castries, *Les Sources inédites de l'histoire du Maroc. Première série. Archives et bibliothèques d'Angleterre* (Paris, 1918, 1925), vol.1, p.29 cited in Willan, *Elizabethan Foreign Trade*, p.120. It is important to note that gold was not a product of Morocco. It came to England by way of imports from the Sudan, which increased greatly after the 1591 conquest.

<sup>20</sup> Porter, "Coins of the Sa'dian Sharifs of Morocco", pp.1288, 1290-91; Porter and Morison, "The Salcombe Bay Treasure", pp.16-17.

<sup>21</sup> According to Porter the ship may have been owned by one of three possible groups: the English, the Dutch, or Barbary pirates – Porter, "Coins of the Sa'dian Sharifs of Morocco", pp. 1290-91.

<sup>22</sup> Willan, *Elizabethan Foreign Trade*, p.255.

There are no records pertaining to the petitioning for its continuation and this indicates strongly that its members saw no purpose to its existence.<sup>23</sup>

Records show that, in its first year of trading, the Leicester partnership imported into England almonds, sugar, and gold from Morocco. However, this venture into the gold trade was short-lived for it was wholly unsuccessful. Six hundred new ducats were purchased by the partnership in Morocco for 8s. 4d. per ducat, which amounted to £252, plus a further 17s. 10d. for expenses. These coins were then sold to the alderman and goldsmith Richard Martin for only £209 13s. 10d., constituting an overall loss of £43 4s.<sup>24</sup> Whilst this documents a legitimate route for the import trade to England of Moroccan gold, it remains a singular instance. Such imports are not listed in the Port Books, yet surprisingly there are still references to the presence of Moroccan gold in London.

Understanding these trading routes is an important factor in determining the agency of the goldsmith in designing and executing pieces for his clients. Documents from the High Court of Admiralty Examinations dating to 1 July 1601 show that in May 1601 the goldsmith Francis Shute bought Moroccan gold at a stall in Lombard Street. In the same month, the goldsmith William Hayns purchased Barbary gold and pieces of goldsmith's work to the value of £190 from sailors. Gold was also bought from Moroccan merchants by the goldsmiths Richard Gore, John Newton, and Thomas Owen.<sup>25</sup>

Alongside African gold, we need to add New World sources that emerged following the voyages of Christopher Columbus in 1492. There is evidence to suggest that Spanish craftsmen were established in South America by the start of the sixteenth century.<sup>26</sup> Following Hernan Cortés' (1485-1547) conquest of Central America in 1521 the potential wealth contained within this region was exploited by the Spanish, with regular shipments of emeralds, gold coinage, bullion, and indigenous wares to Europe. According to the sixteenth-century observer Fray Tomás de Mercado (1525-1575) of Seville the trade from America was 'one of the richest that the world had ever seen'.<sup>27</sup> An increase in the amount of gold, silver, and precious gemstones in the market brought wealth to new groups of men, such as

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<sup>23</sup> Willan, *Elizabethan Foreign Trade*, pp.266, 296.

<sup>24</sup> Willan, *Elizabethan Foreign Trade*, p.256.

<sup>25</sup> Willan, *Elizabethan Foreign Trade*, p.299.

<sup>26</sup> E.A. Jobbins, "Sources of Gemstones in the Renaissance" in *Princely Magnificence: Court Jewels of the Renaissance, 1500-1630*, 12-19 (London: Debrett's Peerage Ltd, 1980), p.16; Priscilla E. Muller, *Jewels in Spain 1500-1800* (Madrid: Ediciones El Viso, 2012), p.36.

<sup>27</sup> Fray Tomás de Mercado, *Summa de tratos y contractos* (Seville, 1587), A2 cited in Ruth Pike, "The Sevillian Nobility and Trade with the New World in the Sixteenth Century", *The Business History Review*, 39, no. 4, Special Latin American Issue (1965): 439-465, p.465.

merchants. With this came a desire for these men to reflect their new-found wealth and status and jewellery was one output for this form of display.<sup>28</sup>

Goldsmiths did not only deal with precious metals, but they also handled precious and semi-precious stones. Many of the gemstones used within the Renaissance came from the east, with India dominating the supply of diamonds in the sixteenth century.<sup>29</sup> These diamonds would enter Europe in an unfinished state to be cut in centres such as Antwerp, Lisbon, or Paris. Rubies came mostly from Burma and these had a finer hue and quality but this gem was also found in Thailand, Ceylon, and India. Scientific examinations undertaken in 1980 of the pieces from both the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum included in the *Princely Magnificence* catalogue revealed that the rubies used were mostly Burmese in origin, suggesting the high quality of the jewellery contained within these two national collections.<sup>30</sup> With control of the Central and South American continent in the hands of the Spanish, Columbian emeralds soon entered the European market. By the mid-sixteenth century, the Spanish were working the mines in the Muzo region. Colombian emeralds are easily distinguished by their inclusions and so determining provenance can be a certainty.<sup>31</sup> Gemstones circulated throughout Europe by means of an international network of well-connected merchants, who would sell their goods at fairs and also directly to a goldsmith.

Items of goldsmiths' work could be set also with glass in imitation of precious and semi-precious gemstones and this is known as paste. The early seventeenth-century treatise *The Art of Glass* written by the Florentine priest Antonio Neri (1576-1614) includes recipes for the making of these pastes, claiming that 'in colour, splendour, pleasantness and clearness, excepting hardness, [they] excel the natural'.<sup>32</sup> Following a description of the making of 'Oriental Emeralds', Neri makes explicit the use for such a material: 'These pasts may be cut and wrought, in every thing, as ordinary Jewels, they wholly receive the same polishing and lustre, and are set in Gold with foiles, as the other commonly are'.<sup>33</sup> Two rings

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<sup>28</sup> For a discussion of 'the commercialization of the nobility and the ennoblement of wealthy merchants' in sixteenth-century Spain, with a particular focus on Seville, see Pike, "The Sevillian Nobility".

<sup>29</sup> Humphrey, "The Trade in Precious Materials", British Museum, 20 January 2012.

<sup>30</sup> Jobbins, "Sources of Gemstones", pp.15-16.

<sup>31</sup> Jobbins, "Source of Gemstones", p.16.

<sup>32</sup> Antonio Neri, *The Art of Glass Wherein Are Shown the Wayes to Make and Colour Glass, Pastes, Enamels, Lakes, and Other Curiosities; Written in Italian by Antonio Neri and Translated into English, with Some Observations on the Author; Whereunto Is Added an Account of the Glass Drops Made by the Royal Society, Meeting at Gresham College*, translated by Christopher Merret (London: printed by A.W. for Octavian Pulleyn, 1662), book 5, chapter 75, p.124.

<sup>33</sup> Neri, *The Art of Glass*, book 5, chapter 77, p.129.

in the Victoria and Albert Museum provide contemporary examples of the use of cheaper pastes in the place of costly gemstones.<sup>34</sup>

It is clear that the sources for the raw materials required by a goldsmith were varied and that to try and assign provenance to an item of jewellery is complex. This means that trying to pin-point the 'nationality' of a piece from its manufacture and materials is irrelevant. David Mitchell has highlighted the futility of assigning authorship in his recent examination of the jewellery trade in London in the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries.<sup>35</sup> He argued that the transfer of skill, innovation, technique, and design between the centres of London, Paris, and Antwerp makes such attempts at precise provenance meaningless. Nevertheless, it is true that often jewels are described by contemporaries using terms such as 'Paris work', 'Spanish work', or 'in the German manner'. However, this did not necessarily denote provenance; rather it indicated works that were perceived as characteristic of a region. So whilst the term 'Spanish work' was used for items recorded in the 1619 inventory of the Holy Roman Emperor Matthias of Austria (1557-1619), the jewels themselves actually hailed from Prague. What was understood by the description as 'Spanish work' was 'heavy enamelled gold with a scrolling pattern in reverse'.<sup>36</sup> Such descriptions may have assisted the customer in communicating his needs to the goldsmith. Equally, choosing an item of basic form, such as a posy ring, allowed a male client to focus on the message inscribed on the surface rather than conceive a complex new design.<sup>37</sup>

Styles were passed through a range of mechanisms from drawings that formed the basis of negotiations between the goldsmith and his customer to prints that circulated widely providing models.<sup>38</sup> In 1548 the engraver Thomas Geminus (fl.1540-1562) published in London *The Moryse and Damashin renewed and increased, very profitable for Goldsmythes*

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<sup>34</sup> VAM 659-1871 is an Italian gilt bronze ring set with a rectangular paste. It is dated to the late-fifteenth or early-sixteenth century. The shoulders are engraved with a cardinal's hat and a mitre surmounting a coat of arms. According to the object's catalogue record this type of large ring may have been worn by mounted couriers over their riding gloves to verify their credentials. The low monetary value of these jewels prevented their wearers from being robbed on the road. VAM M.17-1929 is an early seventeenth-century English ring made of gold and enamelled. The bezel is set with seven red pastes in the form of a six-petalled flower.

<sup>35</sup> David Mitchell, "The Jewellery Trade in London 1570-1620: Transfer of Skill from Antwerp and Paris", paper given at study day 'Expressions: Jewellery in the Early Modern Period', British Museum, London, 20 January 2012.

<sup>36</sup> Anna Somers Cocks, "The Status and Making of Jewellery, 1500-1630" in *Princely Magnificence: Court Jewels of the Renaissance, 1500-1630*, 3-7 (London: Debrett's Peerage Ltd, 1980), p.5.

<sup>37</sup> For example, when Thomas Whythorne discusses an inscription to be placed on a ring, the form of the object is instantly understood – Whythorne, *Autobiography*, p.38. Posy rings are discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

<sup>38</sup> Pattern books of ornamental prints circulated throughout Europe and their designs were transferable between embroidery, larger items of metalwork, and smaller jewelled objects. See for example Francesco Pellegrino, *La Fleur De La Science De Pourtraicture Patrons De Broderie. Facon Arabique Et Ytalique* (1530), reprinted in facsimile with introductory essay by Gaston Migeon (Paris: Jean Schemit, 1908), pl.10.

*and Embroderars*, which contains twenty-eight plates of engraved ornament and was the first known English book of this type.<sup>39</sup> Just over a decade later, in 1561, the French goldsmith and engraver Pierre Woeiriot (1532-1596) published a book that provides a visual record of French Renaissance jewellery.<sup>40</sup> Two plates are of earrings, while the remainder illustrate rings. The one hundred or so designs are prefaced by the author's intention: to present designs that may enrich the art of goldsmithing. Woeiriot stresses that these designs are for his fellow goldsmiths to improve or change as they see fit. While a publication such as this would have served as inspiration for a goldsmith, designs of jewels could be communicated more directly to his client in the form of drawings.

Designs by the French engraver Etienne Delaune (1518-1583) were probably intended to be examples of work that he could produce. Delaune was active at the court of Henry II of France (r.1547-1559) and in 1552 was the king's principal medallist.<sup>41</sup> A number of his ornamental designs survive, including those for jewellery, with the earliest dating to 1561. Significantly, twenty-six drawings that are oval in form are likely to have been designs for jewels worn in the hat. This collection is now in the Albertina Museum, Vienna.<sup>42</sup> Delaune was a practising goldsmith and the size of the drawings (they all have dimensions of about 3.4 x 4.3 cm) reveals that he often worked on a very small scale. Although no known surviving pieces based on these drawings exist, it is highly probable that they were eventually translated onto hat jewels.

A number of designs of jewellery and goldsmiths' work by the artist Hans Holbein the Younger (1497/98-1543) have survived in what is now known as the 'Jewellery Book'.<sup>43</sup> The drawings were once contained within a volume, which may have been the one referred to in the inventory of Henry VIII and described as 'a paper booke conteyning dyuers paternes of

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<sup>39</sup> Hugh Tait, "The Girdle-Prayerbook or 'Tablett': An Important Class of Renaissance Jewellery at the Court of Henry VIII", *Jewellery Studies*, (1985): 29-57, p.32; Joan Evans, *A History of Jewellery 1100-1870*, 2nd ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1970), p.89.

<sup>40</sup> Pierre Woeiriot, *Livre D'Aneaux D'Orfevrie*, reprinted in facsimile with an introductory essay by Diana Scarisbrick (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 1978).

<sup>41</sup> 'Delau(l)ne, Etienne (Stephanus)' in Harold Newman, *An Illustrated Dictionary of Jewelry* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005).

<sup>42</sup> Albertina, Vienna, Etienne Delaune, various titles, Zeichnung collection, inv. nos.11153-11178. See also Yvonne Hackenbroch, *Renaissance Jewellery* (London: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1979), fig.180 A-L where she has published twelve of the designs.

<sup>43</sup> It is also known as Sloane 5308 and accessioned at the British Museum as Prints & Drawings, SL,5308. For a full discussion on the history and contents of the book see John Rowlands, *Drawings by German Artists in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum. The Fifteenth Century, and the Sixteenth Century by Artists Born before 1530*, 2 vols. (London: Published for the Trustees of the British Museum by British Museum Press, 1993), vol.1, pp.152-76.



Jewelles’.<sup>44</sup> Not only do these drawings document the form and styles of jewels and dress accessories from Henry’s reign, but they also probably record actual pieces made for the king and his court. Indicative of the dialogue that may have occurred between a goldsmith and his client over the commissioning of an object are the alternative designs Holbein provided for the same jewel (fig.2.8).



Figure 2.8: Two designs for a medallion with an emblem of a hand issuing from a cloud resting on a closed book and inscribed ‘SERVAR VOGLIO QVEL CHE HO GVIRATO’ (I want to observe that which I have sworn). British Museum, Prints and Drawings SL,5308.22&34.

The presence of the German-born Holbein at the English court shows that cross-continental currents were not only present in the design and materiality of jewellery; the actual makers of these goods could also be of foreign extraction. In fact, foreign goldsmiths appear to outnumber their English counterparts within Henry VIII’s Book of Payments.<sup>45</sup> Noted amongst the records for the first year of Henry’s reign, 1509, there are payments to various foreigners. On 1 July 1509, the Dutch goldsmith John of Utrecht was paid £142 7s. 6d. ‘for gold and setting stones’ and on 14 October 1509 a Parisian jeweller known only as Jacques received £257 16s. 8d. One week later, on 21 October, an unspecified number of Frenchmen were paid £223 6d. for jewels. That is not to say that Henry did not patronise English craftsmen as well; under the entry for 29 July 1509 the goldsmith Henry Worley is paid 43s. for the ‘garnishing of knives’, while in November of the same year London goldsmiths are provided with payment of £333 6s. 8d. towards New Year’s gifts from the

<sup>44</sup> Rowlands, *Drawings by German Artists*, vol.1, p.152; David Starkey, ed., *The Inventory of King Henry VIII. Society of Antiquaries MS 129 and British Library MS Harley 1419. Volume I: The Transcript* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers for Society of Antiquaries London, 1998), no.2163.

<sup>45</sup> Harold Clifford Smith, *Jewellery* (London: Meuthen, 1908), p.208.



king.<sup>46</sup> Ten years later, in 1519, the story is similar with Henry using both foreign and local jewellers.<sup>47</sup>

## 2.2 Guild regulations

Goldsmiths were, and still are, overseen by the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths (Goldsmiths' Company). The London guild of goldsmiths was granted its Royal Charter by Edward III in 1327.<sup>48</sup> Wardens were appointed to ensure that honesty was upheld in the interests of the legitimacy of their craft, both in London and in the provinces. The charter of 1327 required all provinces to send two goldsmiths to London to familiarise themselves with hallmarks, while from 1372 London goldsmiths were permitted to visit local fairs to inspect and assay wares.<sup>49</sup> Malpractice could take the form of manufacturing produce with substandard gold or silver and so the wardens were tasked with testing, or assaying, the metals to ensure they conformed to prescribed standards.<sup>50</sup> The encounter of Thomas Whythorne with his goldsmith has been mentioned above and the weights used within the transaction were illustrative of the latter's tools.<sup>51</sup> However, the weight and counterpane weight had a serious function: it was needed in order to verify that the gold supplied by Whythorne had not been diluted with a base metal. The transparency needed within the context of purchasing from a goldsmith explains why many shops fronted onto the street. All transactions were open, to protect both the goldsmith and the consumer.

The records and minutes of the Wardens held in the Goldsmiths' Company Library in London give an indication of the practice and regulation of selling substandard wares, a serious concern both for the guild which wanted to protect the company's reputation and for consumers who wanted guarantees of quality.<sup>52</sup> These documents also provide evidence of the types of wares produced by goldsmiths in the early modern period. Sampling a selection of the goods that were submitted to Goldsmiths' Hall for assay in the second half of the

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<sup>46</sup> J.S. Brewer, J. Gairdner, and R.H. Brodie, eds., *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, 1509-1547*, 21 vols. (1862-1932), vol.2, pp.1441-1444.

<sup>47</sup> J.S. Brewer, J. Gairdner, and R.H. Brodie, eds., *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, 1509-1547*, 21 vols. (1862-1932), vol.3, pp.1533-1539.

<sup>48</sup> T.F. Reddaway and Lorna E.M. Walker, *The Early History of the Goldsmiths' Company. 1327-1509* (London, 1975), pp.222-24 cited in J.S. Forbes, *Hallmark. A History of the London Assay Office* (London: Unicorn Press with the Goldsmiths' Company, 1999), p.18.

<sup>49</sup> Cherry, *Goldsmiths*, p.57.

<sup>50</sup> The standard of gold changed over the years, rising from a minimum of 19.2 carats in 1300 to 22 carats by 1576 – Cherry, *Goldsmiths*, p.57.

<sup>51</sup> In 1360 the Goldsmiths' Company stipulated that the weights used by a goldsmith were to be sized and standardised on a regular basis, and from 1370 it was necessary for these weights to be hallmarked – Cherry, *Goldsmiths*, p.59.

<sup>52</sup> I am grateful to Dr David Mitchell for introducing me to these sources and to David Beasley and Eleni Bide of the Goldsmiths' Company Library for assisting me.

sixteenth century provides some evidence of the potential for dishonest practices and the need for consumer knowledge. On Monday 26 May 1567, for example, Thomas Pope was fined 2s. for producing a clasp for a cloak that was substandard by forty-four penny weights; Cuthbert Creakesplace was fined 3s. 4d. on Friday 19 September 1567 for four 'SS' that were fourteen penny weights lacking; on Monday 13 October 1567 John Lowes submitted two gold rings substandard by twenty-seven penny weights and was fined 12d.; and on 12 November of the same year George Mason was fined 3s. 4d. for two pairs of cast gilt hooks worse by thirty-seven penny weights and two 'whistells white' worse by six penny weights.<sup>53</sup> There does not seem to be any correlation between the inferiority of the goods and the fine charged, so it must be assumed that a qualitative worth was also considered when determining the levy placed on the goldsmith. Such records within the Company accounts do not only show instances of substandard goods submitted to the Hall for assay; there are entries noting wares seized at various fairs, demonstrating clearly the extent of the authority of the Goldsmiths' Company Wardens.

On Friday 24 September 1568, John Catze was fined for, amongst other things, his poor quality pearl clasps for a cloak at Croydon Fair; a pilgrim by the name of Arnold was found with eighteen silver-gilt rings lacking their full weight in precious metal at the fair in Southwark, known as Our Lady Fair, and fined 2s. for this infraction; and at St. Bartholomew's Fair, George Counden was fined 10s. for his various substandard small wares.<sup>54</sup> Untoward practice even took place at Stourbridge Fair in Cambridgeshire, described by historian and Clarenceaux King of Arms William Camden (1551-1623) as 'the greatest Faire of all England' as a result of 'the multitude of buyers and sellers' and 'the store of commodities there to be vented'.<sup>55</sup> In 1569 Thomas Hutton of Cambridge was fined 20s. for twenty rings and two pairs of hooks; Edward Purdie's inadequate wares consisted of a single clasp for a cloak and a pair of eyes; while William Worsley was made to pay 6d. for a clasp for a cloak without a ring, and a substandard death's head ring and gold wedding ring.<sup>56</sup>

Fines for smaller goods seem to be far more numerous than those for large-scale wares, though a faulty communion cup was discovered by a Company Warden in 1569 at

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<sup>53</sup> "Wardens' Accounts and Court Minutes", *Goldsmiths' Company. K-L. 1566 - 7.ELIZ to 1573 - 14.ELIZ.*, vol.9, Goldsmiths' Company Library, London, ff.354, 369, 370, 374.

<sup>54</sup> "Wardens' Accounts and Court Minutes", f.420.

<sup>55</sup> William Camden, *Britain, or a Chorographical Description of the Most Flourishing Kingdomes, England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the Ilands Adjoyning, out of the Depth of Antiquitie*, translated by Philemon Holland (London: printed by F.K.R.T. and I.L. for George Latham, 1637), p.489. This fair took place in September on Stourbridge Common, Cambridge.

<sup>56</sup> "Wardens' Accounts and Court Minutes", f.424.

Bury, Lancashire.<sup>57</sup> It suggests perhaps that fraudulent goldsmiths believed that customers buying small wares would be much less concerned with underselling when dealing with smaller goods such as clasps and hooks. Nevertheless, the Wardens deemed that regulation of these small-scale articles was fundamental. Further records of goods seized by the Wardens at the 1569 fairs of Bury in Lancashire, Harleston in Norfolk, and Woodbridge in Suffolk show the frequency of attempts at selling substandard small wares, which included ‘claspes without hookes, claspes for clokes, earepykers, pynnes, whistells, paires of gylte hookes, and paires of eyes and claspes’.<sup>58</sup>

It is clear from these records of fines that goldsmiths were engaged in producing the fastenings and embellishments for dress that were commonly worn by both men and women in the early modern period. Further, it gives an indication of these types of goods that were popular amongst English citizens, such as ear-picks and whistles. With people able to purchase items of goldsmiths’ work at the many fairs of England, these sites of selling were seen as legitimate venues of commerce.

### 2.3 Sites of purchase

The recurrence of small-scale dress accessories seized at the fairs suggests that these were the places from which many ordinary people purchased such objects. Based on data compiled from fourteen almanacs published between 1550 and 1600, Margaret Hogden has calculated that in England alone 822 fairs took place within a calendar year.<sup>59</sup> The words of William Harrison (1534-1593), rector of Radwinter in Essex from 1558 to his death and author of a social commentary of England entitled *The Description of England* (1577), in his chapter concerning fairs and markets would seem to support such a figure.<sup>60</sup>

There are (as I take it) few great towns in England that have not their weekly markets, one or more granted from the prince, in which all manner of provision for household is to be bought and sold for ease and benefit of the country round about. [...] as there are no great towns without one weekly market at the least, so there are very few of them that have not one or two fairs or more within the compass of the year.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> "Wardens' Accounts and Court Minutes", f.424.

<sup>58</sup> "Wardens' Accounts and Court Minutes", f.424.

<sup>59</sup> Margaret T. Hodgen, "Fairs of Elizabethan England", *Economic Geography* 18, no. 4 (October 1942): 389-400, p.391.

<sup>60</sup> Harrison's work was written as an introduction to Holinshed's *Cronicles* (1577).

<sup>61</sup> William Harrison, *The Description of England. The Classic Contemporary Account of Tudor Social Life*, edited by Georges Edelen (Washington D.C; New York: The Folger Shakespeare Library; Dover Publications, 1994), pp.246, 253.

The many fairs and markets of England were only one place at which jewellery and small wares could be bought. More permanent sites of purchase existed, and within London Cheapside is perhaps the most noted place for goldsmiths' wares. Within this area of the City, people were able to purchase a range of goods both from the permanent shops and the market that was held within the main thoroughfare. The produce available ranged from saddler's goods, woollen cloth, spices, silks, fine textiles, and goldsmiths' work.<sup>62</sup> Sellers at the market came mostly from the country and in Hugh Alley's *Caveat* of 1598 the folio depicting Cheapside would suggest that these vendors came from the Home Counties of Middlesex, Essex, Kent, Surrey, and Hertfordshire (fig.2.2).<sup>63</sup>

Along the south side of Cheapside from Old Change to Bread Street there was an abundance of goldsmiths' shops, so that this section became known as Goldsmiths' Row.<sup>64</sup> This is confirmed by John Stow in his *Survey* (1603) – 'The Goldsmithes of Gutherons lane, and old Exchange, are now for the most part remooued into the Southside of west Cheape'.<sup>65</sup> A contemporary literary reference, found in the work of the playwright John Marston (1576-1634), supports the argument that this area was popularly known as a site for goldsmiths – 'Ile walke but once downe by the gold-smiths row in Cheape'.<sup>66</sup> Stow heaped further praise of this area of the City later in his work.

Next to be noted, the most beautiful frame of fayre houses and shoppes, that bee within the Walles of London, or else where in England, commonly called Goldsmithes Rowe, betwixt Bredstreet end & the Crosse in Cheape, but is within this Bredstreete warde [...] It contayneth in number tenne fayre dwelling houses, and foureteene shoppes, all in one frame, vniformely builded foure stories high, bewtifified towards the streete with the Goldsmithes armes [...].<sup>67</sup>

The German traveller, Paul Hentzner (1558-1623), commented on this part of the City in his writings.

The streets in this city are very handsome and clean; but that which is named from the goldsmiths who inhabit it, surpasses all the rest: there is in it a gilt tower, with a fountain that plays. [...] There are besides to be seen in this street, as in all others

<sup>62</sup> Archer *et al.*, *Hugh Alley's Caveat*, p.9.

<sup>63</sup> Archer *et al.*, *Hugh Alley's Caveat*, p.90, f.15 shown on p.65 and plate II.

<sup>64</sup> Kenneth Rogers, *Old Cheapside and Poultry: Ancient Houses and Signs* (London: Homeland Association, 1931), p.7.

<sup>65</sup> John Stow, *A Survey of London. Reprinted from the Text of 1603. With Introduction and Notes by Charles Lethbridge Kingsford*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), vol.1, p.81.

<sup>66</sup> John Marston, *The Malcontent. Augmented by Marston. With the Additions Played by the Kings Maiesties Servants* (London: printed by V.S. for William Aspley, 1604), A4v.

<sup>67</sup> Stow, *Survey*, vol.1, p.345.

where there are goldsmiths' shops, all sorts of gold and silver vessels exposed to sale; as well as ancient and modern medals, in such quantities as must surprise a man the first time he sees and considers them.<sup>68</sup>

Within the context of the shops of Cheapside it is important to note that retailing was not necessarily a separate activity from production. Very often the workshop was sited towards the back of the shop space, with the front portion designated as an area for selling. According to Cox and Dannehl, retailing did not mark an intersection between the producer and consumer; rather it was 'an essential performer on the social and economic stage of early modern England'.<sup>69</sup> It has been noted above how trust was an essential component of the transactions, with transparency played out with the weighing of goods and by conducting business in the open.

An indication of what a customer might have found at his disposal can be seen in the goods found in the Cheapside Hoard, a collection of late-sixteenth and early seventeenth-century jewels and loose gemstones unearthed by workmen digging in 1912.<sup>70</sup> Presumably part of a Jacobean goldsmith's stock it includes items such as buttons, chains, pendants, rings, a gilded brass watch, a jewelled and enamelled scent bottle, a gold, diamond and emerald hat ornament in the shape of salamander, and a watch movement set into a large Columbian emerald of hexagonal form.<sup>71</sup>

Alongside fixed sites and regular fairs, more inexpensive items were available from pedlars, chapmen, and itinerant sellers (fig.2.9).

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<sup>68</sup> Paul Hentzner, *Paul Hentzner's Travels in England, During the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, translated by Horace Walpole (London: Edward Jeffery, 1797), pp.31-32.

<sup>69</sup> Cox and Dannehl, *Perceptions of Retailing*, p.9.

<sup>70</sup> Some pieces from the Cheapside Hoard are in the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum but the majority of the collection is at the Museum of London, where it is the subject of an exhibition, 'London's Lost Jewels: The Mystery of the Cheapside Hoard' from October 2013 until April 2014. The exhibition hopes to answer some of the many questions that surround the Hoard, such as who owned it, when and why it was hidden, and why it was never reclaimed.

<sup>71</sup> Hazel Forsyth, *The Cheapside Hoard* (London: Museum of London, 2003); Robert Eric Mortimer Wheeler, *The Cheapside Hoard of Elizabethan and Jacobean Jewellery* (London: London Museum, 1928).



Figure 2.9: A pedlar with a tray that displays various goods, including playing cards, gloves, and a rosary. In his right hand he holds a mirror, a necklace, and a case with utensils. ‘Institor. Der Kramer (The Peddler)’ from *Panoplia omnium illiberalium mechanicarum (Book of Trades)*; print made by Jost Amman; published by Sigmund Feierabend; published in Frankfurt; 1568. British Museum, Prints and Drawings 1904,2-6.103.33.

These individuals operated outside of the guild system and since they were mobile and ephemeral, it is difficult to assess effectively the role they played within the early modern period. A mid sixteenth-century play by the writer John Heywood (1497-c.1578) offers some indication of the varied wares of a pedlar. In a discourse with the character of the Apothecary who queries the goods he has in tow, the Pedlar replies that ‘In euery tryfull [I] must be a medlar’. He then enumerates some of the items that he has to sell:

Gloues, pynnes, combes, glasses unspottyd  
 Pomanders, hooks, and lasses knotted  
 Broches, rynges, and all maner bedes  
 Lace rounde and flat for womens hedes  
 Nedylys, threde thymbell, shers, and all suche knackes  
 Where louers be no suche thynges lackes  
 Syppers swathbondes rybandes and sleue laces  
 Gyrdyls, knyues, purses, and pyncases.<sup>72</sup>

There was anger that these mobile figures did not have to face the fixed costs of more ‘respectable’ retailers, who were vehemently opposed to any attempts to license them. Such a move would legitimise them and thus threaten the trade of fixed-site sellers.<sup>73</sup> In 1597 an Elizabethan statute classed pedlars and petty chapmen along with rogues, vagabonds, and

<sup>72</sup> John Heywood, *The Play Called the Four PP*, edited by John S. Farmer (London: The Tudor Facsimile Texts, 1545, reproduced in facsimile 1908), unfoliated and unpaginated.

<sup>73</sup> Cox and Dannehl, *Perceptions of Retailing*, p.50.

beggars. Anyone classified according to the conditions set out within this Act was subject to a whipping ‘until his or her body be bloudye’ and forced to return to their place of birth.<sup>74</sup> However, a royal proclamation passed by James I (r.1603-1625) in 1618 welcomed and permitted pedlars and petty chapmen to continue their trade since they ‘hath heretofore bene used for the benefit and ease of our loving subjects dwelling remote from Cities and Market Townes’.<sup>75</sup> This licence granted by the king was revoked only three years later.<sup>76</sup> These itinerant traders would have to wait until an Act of 1698 before they were fully licensed to trade.<sup>77</sup> A record of a sale of goods to Thomas Marshall, a petty chapman from Potton in Bedfordshire, by William Wray on 13 April 1581 would suggest that the wares sold by these itinerant traders were not necessarily of poor quality.<sup>78</sup> It is therefore unreasonable to infer that only people from the lower social classes were buying wares from pedlars.

Within the provinces, the sale of precious goods was not necessarily limited to an individual’s specialist trade. It was not necessary to visit a goldsmith’s shop to purchase dress fittings. The account book of William Wray, described as a farmer, draper, and haberdasher with a shop in Ripon, North Yorkshire indicates the wide variety of goods with which he dealt.<sup>79</sup> In addition to the cloth, silk, and buttons of thread and of silk that might be expected of a draper and haberdasher, his records reveal that he also dealt in sugar and spices, such as pepper and saffron. But he also dealt in precious metal and on 1 August 1581 Wray sold George Warckope a variety of cloths and ‘vi dosse silver buttons’ to the value of 9s.<sup>80</sup>

Household account books offer an important indication of purchasing habits. A book recording the expenses for the household of Roger North (1531-1600), second Baron North of Kirtling shows that on 14 September 1577 a number of goods were bought at Stourbridge Fair, including fish, a silver salt, kettles, two firkins of soap, a feather bed, a frying pan, horse meat, raisins, matches, and sugar.<sup>81</sup> A record of purchases from the period 17 to 29 June 1579 shows the types of apparel that North was accustomed to wearing.

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<sup>74</sup> 39 ELIZ c.4 cited in Cox and Dannehl, *Perceptions of Retailing*, p.50.

<sup>75</sup> J.F. Larkin and P.L. Hughes, eds., *Stuart Royal Proclamations: I. Royal Proclamations of King James I, 1603-25* (Oxford, 1973), p.393 cited in Cox and Dannehl, *Perceptions of Retailing*, p.50.

<sup>76</sup> Larkin and Hughes, eds., *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, p.394, n.3 cited in Margaret Spufford, *The Great Reclothing of Rural England: Petty Chapmen and Their Wares in the Seventeenth Century* (London: Hambledon Press, 1984), p.8.

<sup>77</sup> Cox and Dannehl, *Perceptions of Retailing*, p.50.

<sup>78</sup> J.T. Fowler, "The Account-Book of William Wray", *The Antiquary*, 32, (1896), p.117.

<sup>79</sup> Fowler, "The Account-Book of William Wray": 54-57, 76-81, 117-20, 178-80, 212-14, 242-44, 278-81.

<sup>80</sup> Fowler, "The Account-Book of William Wray", p.118.

<sup>81</sup> William Stevenson, "Extracts from 'the Booke of Howshold Charges and Other Paiments Laid out by the L. North and His Commandement: Beginning the First Day of January 1575, and the 18 Yere of Queen Elizabeth", *Archaeologica*, 19, (1821): 283-301, p.295.

A riding clocke lijs. doublets 1s.  
 Silk nether Stocks xls. for Yarne –  
 hose xxxs. ij hats xls. ij pair boot  
 hose xxiijs. for Camericke an ell  
 xijs. for Gloves xxs. Garters vjs.  
 Sweet bags xxijs. viijd. for Points  
 4 dozen viijs.<sup>82</sup>

T.S. Willan has examined the accounts belonging to the Shuttleworths of Smithills and Gawthorpe, gentry from Lancashire.<sup>83</sup> From the evidence contained within these books, Willan has identified that in the sixteenth century the family used all modes of acquisition, making their purchases from pedlars, fairs, markets, and direct from craftsmen. He speculates that these patterns of consumption are perhaps indicative of other families within the same social and geographical positioning as the Shuttleworths.<sup>84</sup> Using the Shuttleworth accounts to provide a seventeenth-century analysis, Willan reveals that while this family continued to buy at fairs, there is sufficient evidence to show that they began to buy most of their grocery, mercery, and haberdashery from London.<sup>85</sup>

As we have already seen, the household accounts and the disbursement books of Robert Dudley for the periods from 1558 to 1561 and from 1584 to 1586 provide a fascinating insight into the purchasing habits of an elite courtier.<sup>86</sup> The importance of these books as a documentary source is noted by the editor – ‘In the absence of comparable material from his colleagues, it can be argued that as a source for the Court Leicester’s accounts are possibly second only in importance to the Treasurer of the Chamber’s account books.’<sup>87</sup> The references that allude to the purchase of goldsmiths’ work are not numerous in the context of the entire published corpus; nevertheless they provide sufficient information on modes of acquisition of jewelled goods, as well as suggesting the types of interaction concerning a man and his jewels within the early modern period.

Within the accounts kept by William Chancy, dated 20 December 1558 to 30 September 1559, Edward Roberts was paid 4*d.* for the hiring of a boat to be sent for the

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<sup>82</sup> Stevenson, *Extracts*, p.299.

<sup>83</sup> See John Harland, ed., *The House and Farm Accounts of the Shuttleworths of Gawthorpe Hall, in the County of Lancaster, at Smithills and Gawthorpe, from September 1582 to October 1621*, 4 vols. (Manchester: Chetham Society, 1856-58).

<sup>84</sup> T.S. Willan, *The Inland Trade: Studies in English Internal Trade in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, (Manchester: Rowman and Littlefield, 1976), pp.70-71.

<sup>85</sup> Willan, *Inland Trade*, p.76.

<sup>86</sup> Adams, ed., *Household Accounts*.

<sup>87</sup> Adams, ed., *Household Accounts*, p.2.



goldsmith John Lonison (1523-1582).<sup>88</sup> This would suggest one of either two possibilities: that Leicester purchased ready-made goods brought to his home by a goldsmith, or that the purpose of the visit was to commission an item of goldsmith's work from Lonison. A number of goldsmiths feature within the household books for Leicester and they supplied him with a range of goods.

Amongst the names of goldsmiths who appear within these accounts are: Brandon, Hans Frank, Evererd (the king's goldsmith), Gilbert, William Denham, Derek Anthony, Ballett, James Stock, Dewes, Anthony Elspyt, Kettlewood, John Harryson, Parteridge, Arthur, Jacob, Augustyne Beane, and Gregory Pryncell. The types of goods they supplied to Leicester's household varied: along with other payments, Hans Frank received £35 13s. 4d. on 29 December 1588 for the supply of New Year's gifts; Evererd was entrusted with the making of 'a George and a cheyne set with dyamons', receiving £70 for his work; Ballett was paid 77s. 9d. for 'ij litell white cuppes'; and Anthony Elspyt's payment of £13 12d. was for 'the sylver knobbes of the bedd'.<sup>89</sup> Some of the entries indicate that Leicester was paying off debts to these goldsmiths, supporting strongly the idea that goods and services could be paid for on credit and eventually honoured with payment at a later date. Within the accounts of Richard Ellis for the period 1559 to 1561, a single entry relating to the goldsmith William Denham states that he was paid £50 on 14 May, £100 on 10 June, and £200 on 17 December.<sup>90</sup>

These records also suggest that Leicester retained the services of one or more jewellers and goldsmiths. Hans Carpion, a jeweller, features frequently within the disbursement book for the period 1584 to 1586. On 7 January 1585 he is paid the sum of £18 'for a paire of braceletts garnished with dyamonds and rubies uppon and elke's hooff'.<sup>91</sup> An entry later in the year is more indicative of Carpion's role within the Leicester household.

Payd by your lordship's commandment to Hans Carpion jeweller at Leaster Hous the xvj of October for thirty buttons of gold garnessed with deyamedes at xxxiijs. a pys for your lordship payd hym at Leaster Hous in the year 1585 the some of xlix*li*. xs.<sup>92</sup>

Further references do not mention Carpion by name but simply refer to him as 'your lordship's jeweler'.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Adams, ed., *Household Accounts*, p.45. John Lonison was Master of the Mint in 1572.

<sup>89</sup> Adams, ed., *Household Accounts*, pp.86, 89, 91, 127.

<sup>90</sup> Adams, ed., *Household Accounts*, p.121.

<sup>91</sup> Adams, ed., *Household Accounts*, p.210.

<sup>92</sup> Adams, ed., *Household Accounts*, p.322.

Information found within these sources also indicates that Leicester used the services of middlemen to act as a conduit between himself and the goldsmith. One particular individual, Stephen Johnson, was a servant of the wardrobe for the period covered by the disbursement book of 1584 to 1586. On 28 December 1584 he was paid £4 10s. 9d. in recompense for the sum 'which he paid for vi dossin and iij buttons weying a oz. di and iij peny wight at lvs. the oz.'; he received 36s. on 4 May 1585 for his purchase of nine dozen silver-gilt buttons for boots, costing 4s. per dozen; and on 20 May 1585 29s. is paid to Johnson 'which he paid for a grose of pointes for your lordship xiijs. and for thre paire of gilte spurres for your lordship xvs.'.<sup>94</sup>

The household accounts and disbursement books relating to Leicester's household for two short periods offer an insight into the ways in which a member of the nobility might obtain his jewelled goods. The information offered is by no means exhaustive, yet it is clear that Leicester had a number of goldsmiths and jewellers from whom he might purchase valuable wares. The evidence is limited, for it does not suggest explicitly where the interactions between Leicester and the various goldsmiths took place; though references to the hiring of boats do suggest that Leicester was able to commission and/or purchase goods from his own home. It would not be surprising to find that, given his status, Leicester did not need to go out to look at goods; he could be assured that high quality items would be sent to him for inspection.

Moving further up the social scale seemed to open up greater possibilities for acquiring jewellery. There were more options available with regards to the sites of purchase, and the types of goods that could be bought were more likely to be commissioned. Henry VIII, as sovereign, had access to goldsmiths and jewellers active at Court. The King's goldsmith would produce plate, small-scale decorative pieces, and dress accessories. On 13 May 1513 Robert Amadas (1470-1532), within the king's service and from 1526 Master of the Jewel House, was paid £1057 15s. 10d. for 'making diuerse things for the kinges grace as whiselles Chaynes braunches bottons aglettes & other diuerse necessities'.<sup>95</sup> In this case, the role of the jeweller was as producer and seller; contemporary sources often use the term

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<sup>93</sup> Adams, ed., *Household Accounts*, pp.341, 355.

<sup>94</sup> Adams, ed., *Household Accounts*, pp.206, 248, 255.

<sup>95</sup> The National Archives, E36/215 also calendared in 'The King's Book of Payments, 1513' in *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 2: 1515-1518* ed. by J.S. Brewer, J. Gairdner, and R.H. Brodie (1864), pp. 1458-63, cited in Maria Hayward, *Dress at the Court of King Henry VIII* (Leeds, UK: Maney Publishing, 2007), p.334.

interchangeably with that of goldsmith. Individuals associated with the role of King's jeweller include John Lengram, Peter van der Waal, and Richard Astyll.<sup>96</sup>

Henry favoured foreign craftsmen and merchants and he encouraged an influx of goods from the Continent to England. In April 1524 the Florentine merchant Nicoluccio Ninaicciesi was granted a licence to import jewels to England, with the stipulation that they were first shown to the king.<sup>97</sup> Amongst the grants given in July 1546 is one that allowed the Parisian jeweller Jean Langue and his son Gilles to import goods into England, with the proviso that 'the King have first choice'.

Almaner juelles, perllles, precious stones, as well set in gold and embrawdred in garmentes as unsett, almaner goldsmythes worke of golde and sylver, almaner sortes of skynnes and ffurres of sables and lusardes, clothes, newe gentleesses of what facion or value the same be, wrought and set or unwrought and not set, in gold or otherwise as he or they shall thinke best for the pleasure of us, our derest wief the Quene, our nobles, gentlemen and other.<sup>98</sup>

In a despatch to Venice by Sebastian Giustinian dated 10 December 1517 there is an incidental reference to another means of royal acquisition. The Venetian ambassador to England writes that following a recent storm which caused the loss of eight ships, some of which were intended for England, 'the King longs for their coming [...] his Majesty means to go to Hampton, saying he shall purchase many articles of luxury (gentilezze), usually brought by said galleys, the which my the Lord send safe'.<sup>99</sup> This certainly provides evidence to suggest that Henry had first access to imported goods, but it goes one step further and implies that Henry met cargo following its journey along the River Thames.

Modes of acquisition by men of different social status seem to have been affected by access to the highest quality (and the most expensive) stones and materials rather than by the exclusivity of a particular design. The landed gentry, as demonstrated by the household accounts of the Shuttleworths, bought from fairs, markets, pedlars, and shops. Robert Dudley may have purchased from fairs and markets but his household accounts show frequent purchases direct from goldsmiths. Henry VIII, as royalty, had first refusal on goods brought

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<sup>96</sup> Hayward, *Dress*, p.337.

<sup>97</sup> Hayward, *Dress*, p.336.

<sup>98</sup> *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 21 Part 1: January-August 1546* (1908), 1383.96. URL: <http://british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=80865>. Date accessed: 04 May 2012. Also cited in Hayward, *Dress*, p.336.

<sup>99</sup> Sebastian Giustinian, *Four Years at the Court of Henry VIII. Selection of Despatches Written by the Venetian Ambassador, Sebastian Giustinian, and Addressed to the Signory of Venice, January 12th 1515, to July 26th 1519*, translated by Rawdon Brown, 2 vols. (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1854), vol.2, p.139.

from overseas by merchants, goldsmiths, and jewellers. He also had goldsmiths and jewellers at Court from whom he could commission goods. As one moved up the social scale, there were more options for acquisition, while the act of purchasing became more exclusive.

This chapter has focused on the loci of purchase and the modes of acquisition available to men of varied social classes, in order to place the purchasing experience within a contextual framework. It has focused exclusively on the means of obtaining new goods, whether ready-made or commissioned. However, jewelled goods also circulated through pawn shops and the second-hand trade. When objects were pawned by their owners they realised their intrinsic monetary value and became little more than a store of wealth. While the focus of this thesis is on the non-monetary value of jewels, the existence of the second-hand trade in early modern Europe is indicative of the fact that goods did have a financial and measurable worth. As Renata Ago states 'The second-hand market is a consequence of this monetary status of things'.<sup>100</sup> The need to pawn jewels affected men regardless of position or status and records show that even James I was required to use his treasured possessions to obtain hard cash. Notably, on one occasion, the iconic and historically important Three Brethren jewel, described as being 'in forme of a Flower with three great Rubies balasses One Diamond three great Pearles and one pendant Pearle', was pawned to the widow of Adrien Thibout for £7000.<sup>101</sup>

The following chapter examines more closely the quality and quantity of jewels owned by men in the early modern period, and looks at some of the actual jewels in detail. It considers patterns of ownership amongst varying social groups and determines whether there existed any emulative factors in the habits of men lower down the social hierarchy. But even at the highest end of society, we cannot assume that men were always able to design their own jewels and dress embellishments. While some were directly commissioned from goldsmiths, some were purchased as second-hand items, and many were given and received as part of a larger cycle of gift-giving. Understanding ownership, therefore, is a multi-layered process at all levels of society.

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<sup>100</sup> Renata Ago, "Using Things as Money: An Example from Late Renaissance Rome" in *Alternative Exchanges: Second-Hand Circulations from the Sixteenth Century to the Present*, edited by Laurence Fontaine, 43-60 (New York & Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2008), p.57.

<sup>101</sup> "Enclosure - Note of Jewels Pawned in Holland", January 20/30 1636, The National Archives, London, SP 84/151 f.32r. The Three Brethren (or Brothers) jewel was originally the property of Charles the Bold (1433-1477), last duke of Burgundy from whom it was stolen following a defeat at the battle of Granson in 1475. It was eventually purchased by Jacob Fugger, of the Augsburg banking family, whose son then sold it to Henry VIII – Clifford Smith, *Jewellery*, pp.209-10.

## Chapter 3

### Owning jewellery

#### 3.1 Introduction



Figure 3.1: Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester; unknown; c.1575. National Portrait Gallery, NPG.447.

In a portrait of 1575, one of the most important jewels in the possession of Robert Dudley (1532-1588), earl of Leicester, is depicted encircling his coat-of-arms: the garter pertaining to the Order of the Garter.<sup>1</sup> Leicester used the garter in all his forms of identification. For example, in his household accounts kept by William Chauncy for the period 20 December 1558 to 30 September 1559 there is a payment of 30s. 'for graving your lordship's seale with the garter'.<sup>2</sup> Leicester was elected as a Knight of the Order of the Garter on 24 April 1559 and installed on 3 June of the same year.<sup>3</sup> It is likely that the alteration to his seal was made between these two dates, so that Leicester could show his new honour immediately following

<sup>1</sup> The Most Noble Order and amiable Company of Saint George, named the Garter, was supposedly established by Edward III (r.1327-1377) in 1348 and, as such, is the oldest chivalric order in Europe – George Bellew, *St. George's Chapel, Windsor and the most Noble Order of the Garter* (London: Pitkin Pictorials Ltd., 1954), p.18.

<sup>2</sup> Simon Adams, ed., *Household Accounts and Disbursement Books of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, 1558-1561, 1584-1586* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p.69.

<sup>3</sup> Simon Adams, "Dudley, Robert, Earl of Leicester (1532/3-1588)" in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). Online ed., edited by Lawrence Goldman, May 2008 <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8160>, accessed 16 August 2011).

his installation. But, within the context of ownership, while Leicester's seal was his own it is important to stress that any official insignia related to the Order was neither commissioned nor owned by Dudley.

The jewelled garters, the collar, and its associated pendant – the Great George – were customarily ordered by the sovereign, not by the wearer. Thus, in anticipation of the creation of the first Knights of the Garter following the accession of James I (r.1603-1625) in 1603, a Privy Council warrant was sent by Henry Percy (1564-1632), ninth earl of Northumberland, and Charles Howard (1536-1624), second Baron Howard of Effingham and first earl of Nottingham, to Sir Edward Cary (d.1618), Master of the Jewel House. This warrant, dated 7 June 1603, referred specifically to the making of the insignia for Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales (1594-1612) and the Danish king Christian IV (r.1588-1648).

His Ma[jes]tie is determined to fill vxx the number of the knightes of the Garter w[i]th six newly to be made by his Ma[jes]tie at the next call whereof the Prince of Wales and the Kinge of Denmark are specially chosen and nominated to be two, And therefore prouision to be made of Georges Garters and Colo.rs fittinge theire place and dignity For so much as we doe not certaynely knowe how the Jewell howse is prouided for this service, we haue therefore thought good to lett yo.u knowe this muche and in his Ma[jes]ties name doe require yo.u (in case yo.u be not alredye throughly prouided in the Jewell house) to cause presentlye to be made and putt in reddines Six Georges and seven Garters. whereof twoe to be made of much lesser compas and proportion fittinge the yonge princes leg, to be garnished and sett w[i]th pretious stones and Jewells fittinge the dignity of his p[er]son, and the other of the Kinge of Denmarks to be garnished w[i]th other Matter of meanee value. And like wise to make prouision of fower Collo.rs w[i]th like regard in the proportion to the ~~prinee~~ person of the Prince and Kinge of Denmark and the rest to be made and had in readines agaynst the daye of the solempnizac[i]on now at hand. thereof there may be noe Defaulte for suche is his Ma[jes]ties pleasure.<sup>4</sup>

The four other men chosen to be honoured on this occasion in 1603 were Henry Wriothesly (1573-1624), third earl of Southampton; Ludovick Stuart (1574-1624), second duke of Lennox and duke of Richmond; John Erskine (c.1562-1634), eighteenth or second earl of Mar; and William Herbert (1580-1630), third earl of Pembroke.<sup>5</sup> According to the warrant, the Jewel House was entrusted to create a Great George and garter for each of these men, with the Prince of Wales receiving two of the latter. It is somewhat puzzling then that

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<sup>4</sup> "Privy Council Warrant to Sir Edward Cary, Master of the Jewel House, for Georges, Garters and Collars for the Prince of Wales and the King of Denmark to Be Made Knights of the Order of the Garter", 7 June 1603, British Library, Additional MS 29975, f.11.

<sup>5</sup> *Perfect Catalogue of all the Knights of the Most Noble Order of the Garter. From the first Institution of it, untill this present April, Anno 1661*, collected and captured by J.N. (London: Anne Seile, 1661), p.28.

the Jewel House is requested to make provision for only four collars, two of which were designated for the Prince of Wales and the King of Denmark. The need for only two new collars may be explained by turning to the Order's statutes and surviving material evidence.

In the opening years of the 1520s Henry VIII (r.1509-1547) introduced a series of reforms to the existing statutes. In particular, the form of the collar, the manner and frequency of its wearing, and its inalienability was made explicit.

From henceforth for ever, whoever shall be a knight of this Order, shall use about his Neck a gold Collar of thirty ounces Troy weight and no more. This Collar shall be made of Plates in Form of the Garter, one of the Plates shall have within it two Roses, the one red, the uppermost white, and another Plate shall have the lowermost white and the upper one red. In the End of this Collar shall hang the Image of St. George. Which Collar the Sovereign and all the Knights of this Order shall be bound to use, chiefly in the greatest and principal Solemnities of the Year [...] if the Collar is to be mended, it may be delivered to the Goldsmith for that Purpose. Neither ought this Collar to be enriched or filled up with Jewels, unless that be done to the Image, which at the Pleasure of the Knight may be well adorned with Gemms or Otherwise. But Care is to be taken that this Collar be not sold, lent, or any Manner alienated, or given for any Cause or Necessity, but ought to be preserved for the Honour of the Order and the Knight.<sup>6</sup>

By tradition the collar was formed of twenty-six garters separated by tasselled knots, with each garter representing the number of knights within the Order. With the form and weight of this collar codified, it would not be incorrect to assume that every collar presented to each knight of the Order was essentially the same, with no distinction of rank. However, it would appear that this was not always the case. For the collar belonging to William Compton (d.1630), first earl of Northampton, which is dated to 1628 or 1629, is comprised of only twenty-five garters (fig.3.2). A comparison of this collar with the late seventeenth-century example in the Royal Collection (RCIN 441924), possibly made for James II (r.1685-1688), has led to speculation that Compton's collar may have been made from recycled elements, for three of the garters differ from the rest.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *The Register of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, from Its Cover in Black Velvet, Usually Called the Black Book*, 2 vols. (London: printed by John Barber, 1724), vol.2, pp.339-41.

<sup>7</sup> See under Curator's Comments field for object number British Museum P&E 1980,2-1.1 where it states that the three differing garters have larger lettering and four cross dots. It is also worth noting that the Royal Collection collar is formed of only twenty-one knots and garters but weighs 33 oz 10 dwt, a practice which seems to have been introduced following the accession of James II in 1685.

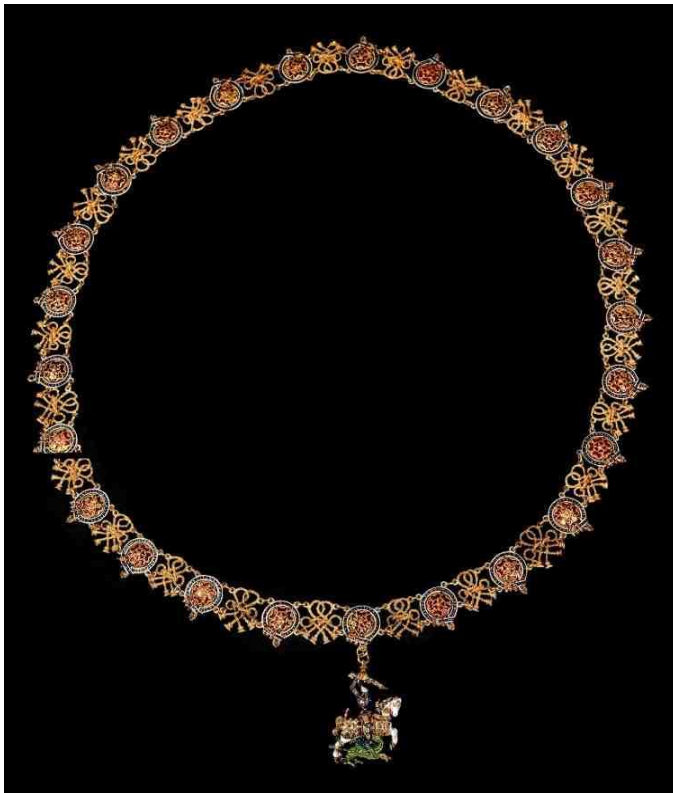


Figure 3.2: Gold and enamelled collar of the Order of the Garter with Great George pendant belonging to William Compton; England; 1628-1629. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1980,2-1.1-2.

Upon his death, each knight (or rather his heirs) was expected to surrender the habit and insignia that had been received by him.<sup>8</sup> In theory, then, the sovereign could re-issue any items to new knights. This would certainly explain why the warrant to the Jewel House only requested provision for four collars, rather than six. The sovereign also had the ability to create new jewels for new knights by calling on the remains of older versions that deceased members of the Order were obliged to return. Yet in practice this did not always occur. Very often insignia was bequeathed to a male heir, in the hope that he would soon be bestowed with the honour of being in the Order and therefore use the testator's jewels. Nevertheless, the three anomalous garters present on Compton's collar suggest that a returned piece was broken up and its elements used to repair another old and damaged collar. Certainly there is evidence from the published inventory of Henry VIII to suggest that Garter insignia was formed from the recycling of jewels.<sup>9</sup>

This means that when we look at evidence for ownership from surviving objects and from images, we need to draw conclusions with some care. In contrast, although we cannot

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, David Starkey, ed., *The Inventory of King Henry VIII. Society of Antiquaries MS 129 and British Library MS Harley 1419. Volume I: The Transcript* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers for Society of Antiquaries London, 1998), no.2529 also cited on p.80 below.

<sup>9</sup> Starkey, ed., *Inventory*, no.2752, p.80 also cited on p.90 below.



easily connect extant jewels to post-mortem inventories and wills, these do give a snap-shot of what was actually considered a man's possessions at the time of his death and indicate what he could (and sometimes what he could not) dispose of at will. For the most part post-mortem inventories include valuations and this assists with determining the relative fiscal worth of objects owned by an individual. These documents provide information on the types of goods that were owned and used within a certain period. Probate inventories of men and women from lower social groups, for whom written and visual sources are so often usually lacking, gives insight into ownership and consumption at less elite levels of society. So while it is necessary to remain aware of the limitations of using inventories as source material, they do provide good written evidence of the types of goods being consumed by a broad cross-section of society. In this section, we examine the jewels that are documented in the possession of men who operated on very different scales, from the ruler to the most modest of his subjects.

### **3.2 The inventory of Henry VIII**

The first inventory to be examined within this chapter is undoubtedly the largest and most impressive: the post-mortem inventory comprising all moveable property belonging to Henry VIII.<sup>10</sup> The inventory began to be compiled following a commission in September 1547, eight months following the king's death. It currently exists in two parts: Society of Antiquaries MS 129 A and B; and British Library Harley MS 1419 A and B. The part found within the Society of Antiquaries manuscript lists money, jewels, plate, ordnance and munitions within the forts, and Henry's ships, as well as providing inventories for the armouries, stables, revels, tents, and vestry. The British Library's manuscript details the contents of Henry's palaces and his specialist wardrobes.<sup>11</sup> The scale of the published inventory is such that the editor of the work, noted historian David Starkey, claims that the acquisition and consumption of the goods acquired by Henry were not merely for his personal fulfilment but that they operated 'as a matter of public policy'.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, privy councillors under Edward VI (r.1547-1553) stated that the 'juelles, plate [and] other rich hanginges' belonging to Henry actually helped shape opinion that saw England 'reputed to have been ...riche and welthie'.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Starkey, ed., *Inventory*.

<sup>11</sup> Starkey, ed., *Inventory*, vii.

<sup>12</sup> Starkey, ed., *Inventory*, x.

<sup>13</sup> J R Dasent et al, eds, *The Acts of the Privy Council*, 46 vols. (London, 1890-1964), II (1547-50), p.21 cited in Starkey, ed., *Inventory*, x.

The entire inventory contains 17810 numbered entries but this by no means equals the amount of goods owned by Henry.<sup>14</sup> The true figure would far surpass this. Some of the entries have several of the same item listed, such as the ‘three Cheynes of golde enameled white and blewe’ (**2055**) or the one hundred ‘Basse shotte’ (**4211**), while others contain more than one object.

Item a Litell Boxe covered withe black vellat conteyneng tenne peces of a womans gerdell of woodde garneshed with Silver two thimbles of Silver ix Crampringes silver a Litell keye of golde enameled a knoppe of silver gilte a litell Crowne of silver gilte (**3407**).

This chapter focuses on Society of Antiquaries MS 129, which constitutes ‘The firste parte of the Inventory of the Juelles plate Stuff Ordenaunce Munition and other goodes’, and in particular folios 150r-245v which contain those goods housed in the Secret Jewel House at the Tower of London ‘vndre the keeping of the right Honorable William Lorde St John greate Master of the kinges mooste Honorable Housholde’.<sup>15</sup> The item numbers run from **2029** to **3692** giving a total of one thousand six hundred and sixty-four entries but some objects such as the ‘Crowne of gold Imperiall made for the kinges majestie our Soveraigne Lorde Edwarde the vjth’ (**3279**), Edward’s coronation crown, were clearly never in the direct possession of Henry VIII.

An enumeration of the entries that list certain types of jewels can only ever give an indication of the scale of Henry’s jewellery. Where an entry contains more than one jewel it has been counted under each type. So, for example, the ‘Cappe of black vellat garneshed with xxj Buttons and xxj paire of aglattes of golde enameled’ (**3437**) is included in the tally for both buttons and dress ornaments, such as clasps and aglets.

The most frequently itemised object type is the button, with one hundred and twelve instances within the inventory, 6.73% of the entries in question. For the most part the buttons are grouped in sets, with the high value materials used in their production being indicative of the king’s standing – ‘xij buttons of golde enameled redde grene and blacke having vppon euerie button twoo small perles’ (**2101**). There are a number of instances of the buttons being listed as separate entities and sometimes there is even a clue as to their eventual use. A note following the entry for the ‘ix buttons of golde carcan fashion euerie of theym having a flower de luce of Dyamountes’ (**2124**) states that these were ‘putt vppon a capp of purple

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<sup>14</sup> References to entries from the published inventory are shown by bracketed bold numbers.

<sup>15</sup> The first part of the inventory is in Starkey, ed., *Inventory*, pp.1-175 with the contents of the Secret Jewel House being in Starkey, ed., *Inventory*, pp.65-102.

vellet made for the king against the comyng of Chatilion the frenche ambassador in May anno 1550'.<sup>16</sup> Presumably these buttons were once the property of Henry, which were then deemed by Edward to be suitable for reuse in 1550. There are multiple entries for caps and many of these have buttons attached to them at the point at which the inventory was taken. A green velvet cap has gold and pearl buttons placed on one side of the turn-over, while on the underside are 'xvj Buttons of golde sett with small Rubies and Emerades and other buttons of small peerle' (3260).

At 5.35% of the entries, the next most frequent type of jewellery is the ring. There are eighty-nine instances, with four of these entries relating to signet rings, for example 'Item vj Ringes of golde hauing ingraven in the kinges Signet' (3217). A significant number of the rings are set with precious and semi-precious gemstones. One 'litle white cofer copper and gilte parcell' contains eleven rolls, each with multiple rings held on it.<sup>17</sup> These eleven itemised entries equate to sixty-seven rings, set with sapphires, diamonds, rubies, and peridots, amongst others. It is not the scores of gem-set rings that stand out from the inventory, rather it is those that appear to be plainer or for which there is supplementary information that indicates use, such as the 'Siluer Crampe Ringes lxiiij oz di.' (2488) and 'gold Crampe ringes xxv oz di.' (2489).<sup>18</sup> Given Henry's penchant for marriages, two notable entries are those that include wedding rings: 'iij wedding ringes of gold' (2483), 'xxvij small rynges and hopes of golde dyuers of them being enameled and one of them being a playne hope like a wedding ryng' (3214).

All manner of dress accessories, including aglets, clasps, and types of fastenings, are also very common. While there are eighty-eight numbered entries that mention such goods, or 5.29%, this does not reflect the vast numbers that are within the inventory. These small-scale ornaments and fastenings could be worn in great numbers on the body and while a single entry may indicate a single set, this would be formed of multiple objects.

Item xxviii paire of square Aglettes golde enameled blacke whereof xiiij paire euery of them hauing a Dyamounde at thone end and thother xiiij euery of them a Rubie at thone ende (2735).

Unsurprisingly, given the sovereign's role as head of the Order of the Garter, there are a number of items associated with the Order including garters, collars, and George pendants.

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<sup>16</sup> Starkey, ed., *Inventory*, p.67.

<sup>17</sup> Starkey, ed., *Inventory*, p.68.

<sup>18</sup> Cramp rings were traditionally blessed and given by the sovereign on Good Friday, in the belief that they held curative powers.

Combining these three object types, in all there are forty-nine entries relating to them within the inventory and this constitutes a proportion of 2.94%. As was decreed in the statutes of the Order, the habit and insignia were meant to be returned to the king upon the death of a Knight-Companion. Some of the entries relating to the insignia are these returned items.

Item a collar of gold with knottes and flowers of the garter poiz xxxvj oz di with a George in a shelde with x small Diamountes garnished poiz ij oz quarter di which collar was the late Erle of Surreys conteyning liiij knottes and garters **(2529)**.

In addition to these jewels entering the king's possession, objects could also leave. A note below an entry for 'vij Georgies of golde one being garnysshed with small dyamountes' **(3010)** states how the George with the small diamonds was given by the king to William Herbert on 9 December 1549.<sup>19</sup> These and other similar entries show the fluidity of the royal stores.

There are sixty-four entries that relate to either loose gemstones or stones that are set in gold collets but not associated with a particular object. These items, such as 'a greate pendaunt peerle lose' **(2142)**, the 'x Dyamountes sett in collettes of golde' **(2113)** or the 'greate Sapphire sett in golde' **(3470)** were presumably waiting to be set into some item of jewellery or had been removed from a jewel that was deemed to be outmoded. At times this is made explicit, with references to 'xj Dyamountes set in broken Collettes of golde' having been 'taken from an habillement' **(2737)**, or 'xxxvj garneshing peerles [...] deliuered to Everart for the garneshing of the kinges Crowne' **(3680)** or 'foure Trafelles of gold every one having foure peerles and a small pointed diamounde [...] for the garnishment of the duke of Somersettes Cronet' **(3683)**.

The contents of the Secret Jewel House also included those items that are not typically considered as jewellery but through the expensive materials lavished on their production they became jewelled goods. So while a comb is not usually classed as a jewel, the status of this often mundane object is transformed by being 'a Combe of golde garnysshed with course stones and perle' **(2922)**. Other goods like books, including Thomas Aquinas' *Catena Aurea* **(2339)** and copies of the bible **(2345, 2347, and 2353)** were stored here too, which is suggestive of the value, both monetary and otherwise, that they held.

There is no doubt that Henry VIII's inventory is impressive both in size and quality. It is indicative of Henry's wealth but, more so, of his status and by extension that of England.

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<sup>19</sup> Starkey, ed., *Inventory*, p.84.

Items that can be considered within the remit of jewellery, such as clasps for fastening dress, which had an ostensibly functional purpose, were still embellished to a great degree.

Item v Claspes gold giving vpon euerie claspe A roose of Diamountes and twoo Rubies (2096)

[...]

Item ij Claspes with twoo rooses of dyamountes (2663)

Item iij Claspes in euery of them one fair dyamounte (2664)

Item one Claspe with a fair Ballais (2665)

Item one Claspe with an Emerode (2666).

His position as king of England gave Henry access to and the ability to acquire the finest jewels. Henry is considered to have driven the desire within the sixteenth century for conspicuous consumption and his inventory certainly provides evidence that he succeeded in using his wealth to reflect his magnificence.

### 3.3 The inventory of Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales

Upon the death of the eldest son of James I, Henry, in 1612 a list of his expenditure was drawn up by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Julius Caesar (bap.1558; d.1636).<sup>20</sup> In amongst these papers detailing building expenses and the accounts for Henry's wardrobe is an inventory of the prince's jewels.<sup>21</sup> The items listed reflect the royal status of the young man, with the first object being a 'Crowne sett with Dyamants, Saphirs and Emerandes'.<sup>22</sup> Other pieces that served as symbols of status include a rapier and dagger, both of enamelled gold and set with diamonds, a gift of the King of Denmark, and a cross-hilt sword enamelled and set with diamonds, given by Lord Harrington.<sup>23</sup> There is also a sword that Henry was given by his mother Anne of Denmark 'at his creation', which presumably refers to his investiture as Prince of Wales in June 1610.

Prior to this, Henry was installed as a Knight of the Order of the Garter just a matter of days after his arrival at Windsor Castle on 30 June 1603 and only a few months following his father's accession to the throne in March of the same year. Many of the jewels recorded in

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<sup>20</sup> William Bray, "An Account of the Revenue, the Expences, the Jewels, &c. Of Prince Henry", *Archaeologica*, XV, (1806): 13-26, p.13.

<sup>21</sup> Bray, "An Account [...] Of Prince Henry", pp.18-20.

<sup>22</sup> Bray, "An Account [...] Of Prince Henry", p.18.

<sup>23</sup> Bray, "An Account [...] Of Prince Henry", p.18. Lord Harrington refers to John Harrington, first Baron Harrington of Exton (1539/40-1613).

the inventory relate to this honour and there are a number of extant portraits in which the young prince proudly displays his Garter jewels.<sup>24</sup>

A Chayne of Spanish work sett with Dyamants with a great  
George hanging thereat [...]  
A great George sett with Dyamants upon both sides [...]  
A great Agat George, sett with Dyamants upon the one syde  
Another great George, sett with Dyamants upon the one syde  
and with Rubies upon the other  
Fyve other Georges sett with Dyamants  
Thre little Georges of plane gold  
One Garter all sett with Dyamants  
One Garter of gold letters with Dyamants thynne sett  
Two Garter of Perles.<sup>25</sup>

Not all of Henry's jewels were associated with honours that he held and a 'Thistle with Dyamants and Rubies' is more personal, being indicative of his Scottish upbringing.<sup>26</sup> Another personal jewel is described as a 'ballat Rubie in forme of an H with perles upon everie syde with with a great perle hanging theretoe'.<sup>27</sup> This may be very similar to, if not the same as, an aigrette-style jewel that is shown affixed to Henry's hat in a portrait by his official artist Robert Peake (c.1551-1619) (NPG 4515). Even items related to riding become jewellery, with Henry having a pair of bridle bosses that are set with diamonds and a pair of diamond-set gold spurs.<sup>28</sup> The buttons owned by Henry, an object type that first and foremost had a practical function, are also suitably ornamented: 'Twelf great Buttons all sett with Dyamants' and Fyften dissonne of gold buttons with a Dyamant in top of everie one of them for his highnes owne wearing.'<sup>29</sup> For someone so young, his jewellery is impressive and the high proportion of goods set with precious gemstones is reflective of his royal position. Perhaps indicative of his age, many of the items either constitute gifts or were given in association with the honour of being a Knight of the Order of the Garter or in relation to the prince's royal status. It can only be assumed that had he lived to a greater age than eighteen, a similar inventory would show a far larger number of jewels and more that would have been chosen by him for his personal use.

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<sup>24</sup> See for example Museum of London A23271; National Portrait Gallery NPG 2562, NPG 4515, NPG 407; and Royal Collection RCIN 420058.

<sup>25</sup> Bray, "An Account [...] Of Prince Henry", pp.18-19.

<sup>26</sup> Bray, "An Account [...] Of Prince Henry", p.19.

<sup>27</sup> Bray, "An Account [...] Of Prince Henry", p.19.

<sup>28</sup> Bray, "An Account [...] Of Prince Henry", p.19.

<sup>29</sup> Bray, "An Account [...] Of Prince Henry", pp.19-20.

### 3.4 The inventory of Henry Howard

It is only a short distance from a royal heir to a royal favourite. The source for the goods owned by the courtier Henry Howard, earl of Northampton, is the post-mortem inventory taken on 16 June 1614 following his death.<sup>30</sup> The editor of this inventory, Shirley, says that 'in the enumeration of plate and jewels it exceeds [...] any [inventories] that have been hitherto published'.<sup>31</sup> The manuscript was discovered in a collection of miscellaneous papers in the possession of Baroness North at Wroxton, Oxfordshire. It comprises a folio of twenty-five leaves and Shirley believes that if it is not the original document then at the very least it is contemporaneous. The document includes an inventory of Howard's plate and jewels, along with another inventory of his 'goodes and howsholdestuffe' at his London properties in Charing Cross (Northampton House) and Greenwich Park.

According to Croft, author of Howard's entry in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Howard's estate may have been valued at near to £80,000, while his annual landed income was over £3000, this latter figure being average for a peer. Howard gained his fortune mainly from this landed income and a monopoly that he held over starch that was both imported and manufactured domestically. This privilege was revoked in 1610 after complaints in parliament, though by way of compensation he then received in 1612 from James I an annual pension of £3000 and a single payment of £6000. Other sources of income for Howard include payments to buy his influence. Most noted of these is his Spanish pension, worth £1000 annually from 1604.<sup>32</sup>

The quality and quantity of jewels recorded in the inventory is indicative of Howard's relative wealth. At the time of his death more jewellery was either on order with goldsmiths or awaiting collection.<sup>33</sup> Howard's inventory has five hundred and seventy-two entries. Forty of these involved jewels giving a total of eighty-nine individual items of jewellery. This includes fifty buttons, which, like Henry VIII's, were grouped into sets. So if these six sets are considered rather than the individual buttons, then the number of his jewelled possessions drops to forty-five. Additionally, however, Howard also owned eighty-two loose gemstones, comprising sixteen diamond sparks, a single large pearl, fifteen small rubies, one diamond,

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<sup>30</sup> Evelyn Philip Shirley, "An Inventory of the Effects of Henry Howard, K.G., Earl of Northampton, Taken on His Death in 1614, Together with a Transcript of His Will", *Archaeologica* 42, no. II (1869): 347-78; Pauline Croft, "Howard, Henry, Earl of Northampton (1540-1614)" in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online edition published January 2008, accessed 28 October 2010).

<sup>31</sup> Shirley, "An Inventory", p.347.

<sup>32</sup> Croft, "Howard, Henry, Earl of Northampton (1540-1614)".

<sup>33</sup> Croft, "Howard, Henry, Earl of Northampton (1540-1614)".

one ruby, ten uncut rock emeralds, and thirty-eight small diamonds contained within a box.<sup>34</sup> These loose gemstones are not considered within an enumeration of Howard's jewels, since they constitute a raw material and not a finished object that could be worn or given away. Yet they are a powerful indication of his ability to commission works to his precise specification. He did not need to wait for a merchant to arrive with rare goods from abroad nor did he have to rely on any single London-based goldsmith to have enough materials to create new styles.

Howard's jewellery forms 6.99% of his total goods. The collection was worth approximately £1454 5s., a figure that does not include a gold and enamelled garter or a pomander in the form of St George on horseback with three rubies pendant, both of which did not have values attached to their entries.<sup>35</sup> Additionally the figure discounts a jewel called the Lesser George, for which also no value was provided.<sup>36</sup> Further, this sum has used a conservative estimate of the values for 'a great Jewell with sixe faire diamonds and other sixe lesse' and 'a Ringe with a large Table Diamond given by the *Count Palatine*'. Priced at 'viiiC' and 'viiC' pounds respectively, these figures could represent either £92 and £93 or £108 and £107.<sup>37</sup> If the higher figures are counted then the true worth of Howard's valued jewels could be as high as £1484 5s.

Like Henry VIII, the most prolific jewelled item within Howard's inventory was the button. Fifty of these are grouped into six sets, which were presumably worn together on items of clothing. All the buttons are gold and are set with precious stones.

Item ten buttons of golde with Rubies waighing two ounces and a halfe wantinge 17 graines	£10
Item 4 buttons of golde sett withe one round pearle a piece and one without, waighinge 8 penny waighte dim.	20s.
Item ten buttons of gold sett with 4 pearles and one Table Rubie, a piece two ounces	£6
Item 16 gold buttons with eight ragged pearles, a piece 2 ounces 3d waighte wantinge 3 graines	£6
Item five golde buttons with 4 pearles a piece, the other stones beinge taken out, waighinge one ounce wantinge 8 graines	55s.
Item five other golde buttons with fower pearles a piece, and in eache a sparke of Diamond, waighinge one ounce half penny waighte	£7

Table 3.1: Buttons in the inventory of Henry Howard, 16 June 1614.

<sup>34</sup> Shirley, "An Inventory", p.349.

<sup>35</sup> Shirley, "An Inventory", p.350. The space for the values for these two items reads 'vacat.' suggesting that neither object was present at the time of appraisal.

<sup>36</sup> Shirley, "An Inventory", p.350.

<sup>37</sup> Shirley, "An Inventory", p.349.



The figures provided by the appraisers allow for the possibility of each button type to be valued individually. Thus it is clear that the costliest button is the gold button set with four pearls and a spark of diamond at £1 8s. a piece. The cheapest buttons are those which are set only with a single pearl, priced at 5s. each.

Again, like the King, the next most common item within Howard's possessions is the ring. In addition to the five serjeants' rings that he owned, given to him in his capacity as Lord Privy Seal from 1608 until his death, Howard had nine other rings.<sup>38</sup> Excluding the serjeants' rings, which by their very nature were plain gold hoops engraved with an inscription that referenced the law or the king, all of Howard's rings save 'an olde ringe of golde without stones' are set with precious stones.

Item a large gold ringe with a large rowghe saphire uncutt waighinge halfe an ounce and twentie graynes	30s.
Item a hoope Ringe of golde with a Rose of Diamondes fower penny waighte 16 graines	£20
Item one golde Ringe withe a Hiacinthe waighinge 3d waighte 3 graines	10s.
Item one golde Ringe with a large Table Emralde waighinge one quarter of an ounce two penny waighte	£18
Item a gold Ringe with a Table Diamond large, waighinge 3d waights, with his stringe	£30
Item a gold ringe sett with 15 Diamondes in a true lovers' knotte with the wordes <i>Nec astu nec ense</i> , waighinge three penny waights thirtene graines	£4
Item a Ringe with a large Table Diamond given by the <i>Count Palatine</i> , waighinge 6 penny waights 10 graines	£93/ £107
Item a hoope ringe with 9 sparkes, one painted [?], the rest wantinge, 2d waighte	£4

Table 3.2: Gem-set rings belonging to Henry Howard, listed in his inventory of 16 June 1614.

Of all the rings listed in the inventory, only two give any hint of information about what significance they may have held for Howard. The diamond-set ring given by the Count Palatine is worth in the region of £100. This somewhat elevated price, when contrasted with the other diamond-set ring, is probably attributed to its provenance.<sup>39</sup> Although it is slightly more than double the weight of the other comparable piece, it is priced at more than three times this example. The ring that is set with fifteen diamonds forming a true lovers' knot and

<sup>38</sup> The rings given by the serjeants-at-law are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

<sup>39</sup> The term Count Palatine is not easily identifiable with any single individual. It was given to those men who had been granted powers by the sovereign to rule within their provinces, particularly applicable in the Holy Roman Empire. It could also signal the longer title of Count Palatine of the Rhine, which was an alternative for the Elector Palatine – a German prince entitled to elect the Emperor. In the absence of further information it is impossible to determine conclusively from whom Howard's ring was a gift and what the circumstances of the gift might have been.

inscribed with a possibly obscure reference to Psalm 44.3 'Nec astu nec ense' (Neither by cunning nor by the sword) may have been a gift. Howard died unmarried, and so this may have been intended to be presented as a love token or betrothal gift. Equally, it could have been to be presented as a marriage gift. On the marriage of the Scottish courtier Sir Robert Carr (1585/6-1645) to Howard's great-niece Frances Howard (1590-1632) in December 1613 he presented the couple with plate worth £1500 and the groom received a sword worth £566.<sup>40</sup>

Howard was installed as a Knight of the Order of the Garter on 16 May 1605. At the ceremony held at St George's Chapel, Windsor he would have been presented with a collar at which there customarily hung a jewel called the Great George. These are both recorded in his inventory: 'a Collar of the order waighinge twenty eight ounces five penny waighte', valued at £84; and 'a rounde embossed *George* of gold and enamelled which usuallie hanged at the Collar of the order, and garnished with diamonds small and great, 27 ounces two dim.', valued at £35.<sup>41</sup>

Within the reign of Henry VIII a new jewel was written into the statutes. The Lesser George was required to be worn daily by Knights. Evidence from Howard's inventory would suggest that he had four such jewels: two of agate; one of lapis lazuli; and one set with diamonds, presumably made of gold.<sup>42</sup> A previous entry also records 'an olde garnishe for a George'.<sup>43</sup> The pendant set with diamonds is not valued but it is likely that given the raw materials used and the association with the Order of the Garter it would have been worth a substantial amount. Of the other three Lesser Georges the one made of the semi-precious stone lapis lazuli valued at £6 is the cheapest, probably since it is 'circuled with golde and enamelled onelie'. The first agate piece recorded is worth £100 and is 'circuled with gold and sett with 57 small diamonds, waighinge two ounces', while the second agate Lesser George described as 'havige on the obverse the figure of *Christ* standing upon the Dragon circled with golde and garnished with 67 small diamondes, waighinge one oz. 4d w[ei]gh[t]s' is priced a little higher at £120.

Howard's will, dated to 14 June 1614, is published by Shirley at the end of the inventory.<sup>44</sup> Two of the Lesser Georges are bequeathed: 'To the most noble and hopeful

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<sup>40</sup> Croft, "Howard, Henry, Earl of Northampton (1540-1614)".

<sup>41</sup> Shirley, "An Inventory", p.350.

<sup>42</sup> Shirley, "An Inventory", p.350.

<sup>43</sup> Shirley, "An Inventory", p.349. This is included alongside the above-mentioned 'olde ringe of golde'.

<sup>44</sup> Shirley, "An Inventory", pp.375-78.

Prince Charles'; and 'to my very good Lorde the Earle of Somersett'.<sup>45</sup> Prince Charles (1600-1649), later crowned King Charles I, was to receive Howard's 'best George' and the earl of Somerset, Carr, his 'second George'. Since Howard does not explain explicitly which of his George jewels were to be bequeathed, it is only possible to speculate on how the term 'best' was qualified. Marginalia to the published inventory shows that Shirley has judged 'best' to be the costliest, stating that the agate Lesser George with the image of Christ was given to the Prince and that Carr received the other agate jewel. In the absence of further testamentary instructions it is difficult to know precisely Howard's wishes. In addition to the Georges discussed above and demonstrative of the pride and honour had by being a Knight-Companion of the Order of the Garter, Howard owned two further jewels either in the form or with the image of St George on horseback.

Item a pomander *George* with 3 pendant rubies – vacat.

Item a watche *George*, beinge one of those two when the Inventorie was taken which the L[orship]s subscribed, that then remained in M[aste]r Will[iam] the goldesmithes hands waighinge 2oz: 2d. waighte - £4.<sup>46</sup>

The quality and quantity of jewels from the inventory are befitting of both Howard's status at court and his wealth. Without exception, all these pieces are made of gold and the majority have also precious or semi-precious stones set within them. The value of his jewelled possessions was considerable, particularly when contrasted with his collection of gold display pieces worth £316 10s.<sup>47</sup> The remainder of his inventory does indicate his relative wealth and his desire to purchase goods appropriate to his station: his gilded plate was worth £3302 3s.; his silver plate and vessels amounted to £2820 1s.; he owned a number of tapestries and paintings, including many of courtiers and royal figures; and of his wearing apparel, his six doublets are worth £24 and thirteen pairs of breeches £41.<sup>48</sup> Howard's inventory is indicative of a man who used his jewels conspicuously to communicate his wealth and favour at the Jacobean court.

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<sup>45</sup> Shirley, "An Inventory", pp.375-76.

<sup>46</sup> Shirley, "An Inventory", p.350.

<sup>47</sup> Shirley, "An Inventory", p.348. This comprises two standing cups of gold, one rock crystal bowl in the form of a shell set in gold, three gold bowls, a clock made of gold and crystal and set with rubies and diamonds, and an hour glass with a gold frame and set with eight diamonds.

<sup>48</sup> Shirley, "An Inventory", pp.351-53, 366-67.

### 3.5 The inventory of William Herbert

The unpublished household inventory of William Herbert, first earl of Pembroke, is a vellum-bound volume with three stitched leather straps used for reinforcement, with evidence of a fourth strap remaining to which is affixed a metal buckle.<sup>49</sup> The inventory is hand written in English and it comprises one hundred and eighteen paper pages, which detail Pembroke's goods, including his gold and silver plate, jewels, clothing and accessories, furnishings, linen, and armour.<sup>50</sup> The inventory is dated 12 December 1561 and it serves as a record of the goods owned by Pembroke, similar to a modern-day stock-check.

Appearing before the listing of jewellery that was presumably worn by Pembroke himself is an inventory taken on 31 January 1561 of those jewels that were in his wife's 'custodie'.<sup>51</sup> While this does not necessarily indicate that these were items worn exclusively by his second wife Anne (1524-1588), daughter of George Talbot (1468-1538), fourth earl of Shrewsbury, some of the pieces mentioned would appear to be for female use.<sup>52</sup> Those that were not exclusively gendered as feminine were still presumably worn by Anne, given that they were in her keeping. The groups of objects listed here are girdles, billements, collars, carcanets, bracelets, chains, beads, tablets, flowers, brooches, buttons, and aglets. In all there are seventy-one itemised entries but these include five for buttons and three for aglets, all of which include more than a single item.

Buttons	Spanyshe Buttons of golde beinge enameled blacke and blewe and white viij dosen paires Buttons with iij pearles in a pece viij dosen paires Buttons of golde white and blewe enameled w[i]th Cupides bowe viij dosen paires Buttons of golde enameled blacke v dosen paires and ij buttons Buttons enameled white and blacke v dosen
Agglettes	Agglettes of golde enameled blacke and white vij dosen paires Agglettes with pearles enameled white vj dosen paires Greate Agglettes blacke enameled lxiiij. <sup>53</sup>

<sup>49</sup> "Inventory of Gold and Silver Plate, Jewells and Apparrell Etc. Of William, Earl of Pembroke", 12 December 1561, National Art Library, MSL.1982-30.

<sup>50</sup> Descriptive details of the inventory taken from Guy Turner, "Economising on Possession: The Inventory of the Earl of Pembroke, dated 1561", Royal College of Art, London, (unpublished M.A. dissertation, 1998), p.10.

<sup>51</sup> "Inventory [...] Of William, Earl of Pembroke", ff.31r-37r.

<sup>52</sup> Pembroke's first wife was Anne Herbert (c.1515-1552), lady-in-waiting to all of Henry VIII's wives and younger sister of the king's sixth consort Katherine Parr (1512-1548). By her he had issue: Henry Herbert, second earl of Pembroke (c.1539-1601); Sir Edward Herbert (1547-1595); and Lady Anne Herbert (1550-1592).

<sup>53</sup> "Inventory [...] Of William, Earl of Pembroke", ff.36v-37r.

The total number of buttons comes to four hundred and ten, while the aglets number two hundred and nineteen. Thus the total number of jewels in Anne's custody leaps significantly from seventy-one to six hundred and ninety-two. There is no real indication from the descriptions of these objects as to why they were more suited to female use than those equivalents listed in a later section and presumably for Pembroke's own use.

In an addendum to Pembroke's will signed by his son Edward (1547-1595) and the earl of Leicester of words spoken to them the night before his death on 17 March 1570, 'he gave unto my ladie his wife all her apparall and such Jewelles as she brought with her or hath presentlie in her custodie of his guifte'.<sup>54</sup> It is significant that such a provision was not included in the original text of the will, which is dated 23 December 1567. It is likely that as Pembroke lay on his death-bed he wished to legalise Anne's ownership and retention of those jewels that were used by her. Importantly, although his wife was using these valuables, until his death on 17 March 1570 all these objects were Pembroke's property.

This section is then followed by another inventory, which lists 'all suche apparell Furies and Jewelles as be in the chardge of Thomas Gregory' as of 17 August 1561.<sup>55</sup> The total number of itemised entries within this part is four hundred and forty-five, of which eighty-four record jewellery. This constitutes a percentage rate of 18.88% but this figure is skewed since it does not take into account possessions other than Pembroke's wearing apparel and associated jewels. A very conservatively low estimate of the itemised entries from the entire vellum-bound inventory gives a total of one thousand, six hundred and twenty-six. Incorporating the jewels that were later bequeathed to Anne gives a total number of one hundred and fifty-five entries for jewellery. This means that about 9.53% of entries were for jewels, which is probably more accurate since it includes all of Pembroke's property. An approximation of the individual items of jewellery listed amongst the goods in the care of Thomas Gregory comes to six hundred and twenty-three, with four hundred and ninety-one of these being buttons and twenty-two being aglets. This does not take into account those buttons that are listed in amongst the clothing as integral parts, but rather treats those that are listed separately as jewelled items in their own right.

As we have seen before, after dress items the next most popular form of jewellery in Pembroke's wardrobe were rings, including one which was probably his signet ring: 'a ringe

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<sup>54</sup> Charles R. Straton, ed., *Survey of the Lands of William First Earl of Pembroke. Transcribed from Vellum Rolls in the Possession of the Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery*, 2 vols. (Oxford: privately printed for the Roxburghe Club, 1909), vol.2, p.557.

<sup>55</sup> "Inventory [...] Of William, Earl of Pembroke", ff.38r-81v.

with the Dragon graven'.<sup>56</sup> Since the dragon was Pembroke's crest, this particular object was clearly used as a sealing device. Of the remainder of the rings a large proportion are made of gold and are enamelled and set with a precious or semi-precious gemstone, such as diamond, ruby, emerald, or turquoise.<sup>57</sup> Additionally to these, there are a number of rings which fall into distinct categories: mourning or *memento mori* rings; scientific rings; posy rings; and cramp rings.

Firste iij Deathes heddes enameled w[i]th black  
 Item ij other Deathes heddes enameled white and black  
 [...]  
 Item a ringe with a Diall and a white Topias in the toppe  
 Item ij Ringes of Astronome  
 [...]  
 Item xij litle hoopes enameled of divers coolers  
 Item xv crampe ringes whereof v of golde and x of silver.<sup>58</sup>

The image of the death's head was a popular *memento mori* device, used as a reminder of the transience of life, but it also became applied to the outer face of a mourning ring, which was bequeathed by the deceased to family and friends.<sup>59</sup>

The inventory includes frequent references to objects that constituted insignia of the Order of the Garter, such as the garter itself. The most common item mentioned, however, is the George. One is recorded as being on a collar and is most likely to be Pembroke's Great George jewel.

Item a faire Coller w[i]th xl faire peces of golde whereof xx like redde roses w[i]th garters aboute them enameled white blew, redde, and grene, and thother xx beinge cleane golde w[i]thout amell w[i]th a faire George sett w[i]th vij Diamondes enameled white and grene.<sup>60</sup>

The form and decoration of the collar was prescribed heavily in this period and so it was on the George pendant that men were able to lavish expense. A note within Henry VIII's inventory suggests that Pembroke's collar was made by reusing parts from 'a Coller of golde of thorder of saynt michael' (2752) within the royal collection.

<sup>56</sup> "Inventory [...] Of William, Earl of Pembroke", f.79r.

<sup>57</sup> "Inventory [...] Of William, Earl of Pembroke", ff.79r-80r.

<sup>58</sup> "Inventory [...] Of William, Earl of Pembroke", f.79r.

<sup>59</sup> For more on *memento mori* and mourning rings, see Chapter 9.

<sup>60</sup> "Inventory [...] Of William, Earl of Pembroke", f.76r.

Ix decembre 1549 this coller gyven by the kinges majestie to sir william herbert knight master of the kinges horses to make for the said sir wylliam a coller of the garter which coller of St Michell within wrytten was deliuered to hym of the weight of xxx oz of golde by virtue of the counsailes warraunt.<sup>61</sup>

The timing of this royal gift was perhaps to celebrate Pembroke's appointment as master of the king's horse only the week before.<sup>62</sup> Within the inventory a further twelve Georges are found on chains and two are on carcanets. These are probably a jewel known as the Lesser George, which was to be worn daily by Knights of the Order of the Garter. Four other Georges are listed as separate objects.

Item a George enameled given my Ladie by my La[die] Marques  
Item a George enameled w[i]th cutte worke on thone side given my L[ord] by my  
La[die] Anne Wharton  
Item a George w[i]th Kinge Phillippes face on thone side  
Item a litle George.<sup>63</sup>

It is perhaps to be expected that a Knight of the Garter in a position such as Pembroke's should have so many items relating to this honour. Since these jewels were indicative of a privilege bestowed by the sovereign, the wearing of them was not seen as problematic. The jewellery within Pembroke's inventory seems to show that provided there was some ostensible function or purpose, other than mere frivolity, they were legitimate possessions for a man. It is telling that two knives are in fact recorded within the lists of jewels.

A faire knyfe of golde w[i]th a glasse in thende of the hafte, sett w[i]th xxi perles and iiij rubies enameled blewe, redde, and white with a sheethe of black veluett sett w[i]th xxvij perles trymed w[i]th siluer  
Another knyfe of golde w[i]th viij rubies on the hafte and vj small perles, blewe, white, and grene enameled w[i]th a sheathe of black veluett garnished w[i]th golde sett w[i]th iiij small rubies grene and white enameled w[i]th a lace of black silke and golde.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Starkey, ed., *Inventory*, p.80.

<sup>62</sup> Narasingha P. Sil, "Herbert, William, First Earl of Pembroke (1506/7-1570)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) Online ed., edited by Lawrence Goldman, May 2009 <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13055> accessed 28 October 2010.

<sup>63</sup> "Inventory [...] Of William, Earl of Pembroke", f.77v. Two of these were gifts from women, with one being placed in the custody of Pembroke's wife. Presumably, a piece of jewellery related to the Order of the Garter was seen as an appropriate gift for a high-ranking courtier such as Pembroke.

<sup>64</sup> "Inventory [...] Of William, Earl of Pembroke", f.80r.

In a mid sixteenth-century despatch to the Doge and the Senate Federico Badoer (1519-1593), the Venetian ambassador at the imperial court, said of Pembroke that he 'is considered the chief personage in England, having more followers there than anybody'.<sup>65</sup> For someone so highly esteemed, who was also able to sustain favour with four successive sovereigns from Henry VIII through to Elizabeth I (r.1558-1603), it is unsurprising that his inventory lists an impressive array and quantity of possessions. As a prolific courtier he needed to ensure that his external appearance reflected his status and wealth. Though he maintained a certain degree of propriety and his jewelled possessions were by and large limited to buttons, Garter insignia, and rings.

### 3.6 The inventory of Thomas Ramsey

The inventory now under discussion moves away from court circles and into the urban environment.<sup>66</sup> Sir Thomas Ramsey was Lord Mayor of London in 1577.<sup>67</sup> He died in 1590 and his will was proved at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.<sup>68</sup> Ramsey was a member of the Grocers' Company and, based on the goods listed in his inventory, he is described by Fairholt as 'a rich merchant'.<sup>69</sup> Ramsey's inventory, with its vast amount of display plate and apparel valued at £75 10s. 2d., is indicative of the consumption required for a man and citizen of his status and wealth living in the early modern period.<sup>70</sup>

Included within the article in which the inventory appears are copies of Ramsey's two wills, which dispose of personal items and landed property in turn.<sup>71</sup> The latter is of little interest for the purpose of this chapter and thesis.<sup>72</sup> The will that discusses personal bequests is dated to 20 September 1585 and, 'accordinge to the laudable custome of the citie of London', his estate is divided equally in two parts: 'the one equall part shalbe and remayne to my welbeloved wife Dame Mary Ramsey' and 'the other moitie or halfe I reserve to my selfe therwithe to performe my legaceys'.<sup>73</sup> Ramsey's bequests are all monetary, with certain individuals given additionally a black gown. In all, twenty-one people are remembered in

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<sup>65</sup> Calendar of State Papers, Venetian, 1555-1556, no.31 cited in James Edward Nightingale, *Some Notice of William Herbert, First Earl of Pembroke of the Present Creation* (Devizes: H.F. & E. Bull, 1878), p.32.

<sup>66</sup> F.W. Fairholt, "On an Inventory of the Household Goods of Sir Thomas Ramsey, Lord Mayor of London 1577", *Archaeologica*, 40, part II, (1866): 311-342, pp.323-41.

<sup>67</sup> Information taken from <http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/5C61458D-4D0A-4C07-AE3E-90C1C20B1E71/0/lordmayors1189.pdf> and accessed on 5 May 2012.

<sup>68</sup> "Will of Sir Thomas Ramsey, Alderman of City of London", 29 May 1590, PROB 11/75, The National Archives, London.

<sup>69</sup> Fairholt, "Inventory [...] of Sir Thomas Ramsey", p.311.

<sup>70</sup> Fairholt, "Inventory [...] of Sir Thomas Ramsey", p.312.

<sup>71</sup> Fairholt, "Inventory [...] of Sir Thomas Ramsey", pp.315-20.

<sup>72</sup> This is dated 9 July 1586.

<sup>73</sup> Fairholt, "Inventory [...] of Sir Thomas Ramsey", p.315.



such a way and the purpose of these gowns is explained by the bequest to the incumbent Lord Mayor of London: ‘And I do give and bequathe to my Lord Mayor for the tyme beinge so that he will come to my buryall a blacke gowne’.<sup>74</sup> It is unlikely that Ramsey left actual garments for these men and women who are in receipt of this bequest; as with mourning rings, it is more likely that Ramsey was providing the money for such gowns to be purchased or made.<sup>75</sup>

Only a small section of Ramsey’s inventory is dedicated to jewellery and these are grouped together under the heading of ‘Golde chaines, rings, and jewells, as followeth, viz.’.<sup>76</sup> It is difficult to estimate a total for the number of goods owned by Ramsey, due to entries such as that listing his pewter giving only an overall weight and valuation without enumerating these pieces.<sup>77</sup> The number of actual itemised entries within the inventory is four hundred and forty-six, with six of these described as jewellery. This constitutes a percentage rate of only 1.35%. In all these six entries show that Ramsey owned twelve pieces of jewellery valued at £208 17s. 10d.

Unlike the previous inventories, in which dress accessories, rings, and Garter-related jewels stand out, the most notable of all Ramsay’s jewelled possessions was a single item that related, at least indirectly, to his office. This was the ‘greate chaine of golde’, which weighed thirty-nine ounces, three penny weights and half an angel weight and was valued at £110 14s. 4d. The weight is similar to that prescribed by the revised statutes of the Order of the Garter for the collar, set at thirty Troy ounces. This chain recorded in the inventory is not the mayoral chain, since this particular chain-of-office in the form of a collar of SS was bequeathed to the City by a former Mayor of London, Sir John Aleyn (c.1470-1544), in 1545 ‘to be used always and worn by the Lord Mayor of this City for the time being’.<sup>78</sup> It is possible that to reflect the dignity of his office, Ramsey had commissioned a large gold chain for his own personal use.

The next most expensive piece, considerably more than Ramsey’s other jewels, is ‘a girdell of golde’ that weighed twenty-eight ounces and valued by the appraisers, including the

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<sup>74</sup> Fairholt, "Inventory [...] of Sir Thomas Ramsey", p.317.

<sup>75</sup> Mourning rings are discussed in more detail in Chapter 9.

<sup>76</sup> Fairholt, "Inventory [...] of Sir Thomas Ramsey", p.337.

<sup>77</sup> Fairholt, "Inventory [...] of Sir Thomas Ramsey", p.330. The total worth of Ramsey’s pewter was £45 17s. 1d.

<sup>78</sup> Corporation of London Records Office Rep. 11, f.215 cited in Ian Archer, Caroline Barron, and Vanessa Harding, *Hugh Alley's Caveat: The Markets of London in 1598. Folger MS V.A.318* (London: London Topographical Society, 1988), p.82. See also John Stow, *A Survey of London. Reprinted from the Text of 1603. With Introduction and Notes by Charles Lethbridge Kingsford*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), vol.1, p.112 in which he notes that Sir John Aleyn ‘gave to the Cittie of London, a rich collar of goulde, to bee worne by the maior’. The collar is still used by the Lord Mayor of London today (though he uses a replica for daily affairs) and forms part of the Mansion House plate collection.

goldsmith Pattricke Brewe, at £81 4s. 6d. While this object is worth less than the chain, it has been priced at a higher value per ounce: fifty-seven shillings per ounce, rather than fifty-six shillings per ounce. This suggests two things: one, that the girdle was wrought to a higher level of craftsmanship; and two, that the appraisers applied their own value judgement towards the fashioning of these jewels.

After these two major pieces, the most common jewelled item within Ramsey's possession was, like his superiors' collections, the ring. He owned eight of these, one of which was a signet ring. The other seven rings are not described other than being of gold. They are listed together in one group and, as such, their value by weight is identical: 'weyinge ij oz. di. and di. qr. at 48s. per oz.'. Consequently, they are priced at £6 6s. overall. This suggests that they are all similar in form and decoration, for the signet ring with its bezel engraved with 'S[i]r Thomas Ramsey's armes' weighs one ounce and is valued at 51s. Once again the appraisers determined that the value of the item lay not only in its raw material but also in its workmanship. Since no further description is given of the seven gold rings, it is likely that they were simple plain hoops, which may have been engraved to either face with a motto, amatory or otherwise. The presence of a signet ring amongst Ramsey's goods is not surprising given that he was a merchant who needed a tangible means of legitimising and authenticating business transactions. The signet also served as a means of identification within the world of commerce. That his signet is of gold reflects the economic success he achieved.

Ramsey's jewels, while not numerous, are perhaps indicative of the goods of a wealthy urban citizen who had enjoyed the dignity of a civic office. The value of his jewels is high, but this figure is inflated by two substantial items: the large gold chain or collar, and the gold girdle. Rings are the most common object to be found and this is an appropriate item of male ownership. In particular, the signet is a ring that one would expect to see in an inventory of Ramsey's wealth and status.

### **3.7 The Ipswich inventories and London wills**

The inventorial records for the Ipswich inhabitants move us further away from an urban or court context, though Ipswich was by no means a rural community in the sixteenth century. The earliest recorded inventory published within this collection dates to 1583 and by this time Ipswich was ranked amongst the top ten of all English provincial towns in terms of the wealth

and status of its population.<sup>79</sup> The town was involved in trade and commerce, with particular emphasis on the textile industry. The location of Ipswich, on the estuary of the River Orwell, meant it was ideal for the export and import of goods and it was suitably placed to assist in the transportation of coal between London and Newcastle. Goods and services intended for the region passed through Ipswich and so a certain degree of wealth was generated here.

Statistical analyses have been carried out to understand better the nature of these inventories as a group. The results are merely indicative of this body of evidence and conclusions can only be drawn from the information presented in these sources. A more detailed examination of the jewelled possessions of some of these Ipswich inhabitants is then interpreted within the context of the entire corpus. Within the edited publication, the inventories have been numbered and this same format has been respected here for ease of reference and this is indicated by the use of bracketed bold numbers.

The gender spilt of the inventories is such that there are fifty-nine men and thirteen women represented, which equates to 81.9% of the inventories being indicative of male ownership. Roughly speaking, then, there are four times as many men as women within this sample. The majority of the women are recorded as widows with only Ede Riffam (**17**), a maidservant, as the exception. The editor of these inventories noted that the widows listed here were married to those involved in clothing export, whose wills were proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury and whose inventories are no longer extant. The wealth of these men is apparent only through the inventories of their wives.<sup>80</sup> It is therefore not inappropriate to consider also these inventories belonging to women, since they serve as records of goods that may have once belonged to their husbands.

As a group jewelled possessions are present in only nine inventories, or 12.5%. By separating the group along gender lines, there is a marked difference in terms of percentages. Only five men possess jewels and this is only 8.5% of the total male inventories, whereas four female inventories list jewels and this equals 30.8% of female ownership. This can be explained by the fact that a number of possessions may have been bequeathed in wills by men and these objects would not then be recorded in the probate inventory. They then reappear many years later in the inventories of their wives.

There are twenty-five different occupations listed for the men, with the majority of them being involved in the production of goods, ranging from blacksmiths and butchers to

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<sup>79</sup> Michael Reed, ed., *The Ipswich Probate Inventories 1583-1631* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: published by the Boydell Press for the Suffolk Records Society, 1981), p.1.

<sup>80</sup> Reed, ed., *Ipswich Probate Inventories*, p.3.

linen-weavers and a chandler. Eighteen inventories do not specify the man's occupation. Unsurprisingly, given the location and main trade of Ipswich, there are seven mariners or sailors, one ship carpenter, and one merchant represented, along with fourteen men involved in the textile industry in some form including five tailors.<sup>81</sup> The five men who have jewellery listed within their inventories are John Seely, occupation unknown (7); Edward Barnes, a sailor (14); Matthew Nicholas, a mariner (30); Simon Isam, a tailor (60); and Richard Rainsford, a clerk (71).

John Seely's inventory is dated to 8 September 1584.<sup>82</sup> Although his occupation is not listed, the quantity of certain items kept in his chamber suggests that he may have been a tailor.

xiiij paire of cruell garters	1s. 9d.
xij dossen pointes	1s.
viiij paire of garters more	8d.
viiij looking glasses	4d.
one thowsande and a halfe of pinnes	3d.
other papers of great pinnes	3d. <sup>83</sup>

There appear to be no items of personal significance within this inventory and so while the twelve dozen points may have been of some relevance in a different context, here they can be discounted. The relatively small value of these points and the fact that no material is recorded would suggest that these were made of base metal.

The sailor Edward Barnes, whose inventory is dated to 14 March 1590, owned twenty-four silver buttons.<sup>84</sup> They are itemised with a cupboard and two seacards, the latter making reference to either the card of a mariner's compass or a navigational chart. All these items together are valued at 19s. from an estate worth a total of £24 13s. The inventory is structured in such a way that at least two hundred and seventy individual items are recorded under only eighteen groups. This does not take into account the apparel or unappraised trash valued at £2 and 1s., respectively. Thus trying to determine Barnes' jewelled goods as an overall percentage of his entire estate is slightly problematic. The most accurate method is to consider each item individually, though even this is impossible since the apparel is not

<sup>81</sup> These fourteen men are involved in the following occupations: five tailors; one woollen-weaver; one dyer; one shoemaker; two linen-weavers; two poldaris weavers; one Glover; and one cloth-worker.

<sup>82</sup> Diocesan archives in Norfolk and Norwich Record Office, Norwich (NRO) INV/2 no.37 cited in Reed, ed., *Ipswich Probate Inventories*, pp.22-23.

<sup>83</sup> 'cruell' – a worsted yarn used in ornamental needlework.

<sup>84</sup> Archdeaonry archives in Ipswich branch of Suffolk Record Office (SRO (I)) FE1/2 no.104 cited in Reed, ed., *Ipswich Probate Inventories*, pp.30-31.

itemised. A second issue arises through the terminology used for the silver buttons. They are listed as two dozen buttons, which would suggest that there are two sets of twelve and that it would be perhaps inaccurate to consider them as twenty-four single buttons. So, by taking two hundred and seventy as a minimum number of items owned by Barnes and considering the buttons as constituting only two items, his jewellery only forms 0.74% of his entire possessions. Yet if each button is classed separately this proportion leaps to 8.89%, which is a marked increase.

The next male inventory in the published sequence to have any evidence of jewels is that of Matthew Nicholas, described in his inventory of 25 April 1599 as a mariner.<sup>85</sup> Amongst a total of twenty-seven entries is one that lists 'a silver whistell and silver chaine' and these are valued at £1 1s. from an estate worth a total of £19 6s. 3d. There are one hundred and seventeen individual items but this only counts as one item each the entries that refer to 'other apparrell for the sea', 'certaine Lynnes for the sea', and 'monie in his purse'. Without any further information it is impossible to establish how much clothing and linens Nicholas owned. The two jewelled objects within his possession constitute only 1.7% of the total itemised objects. These would appear to be the most valuable of all his goods, fiscally speaking. Given that there are no other references to personal jewels and given his occupation, it is likely that the whistle and chain on which it hung were associated with his professional life. Thus for a man who owned little more than what was needed for everyday living, such as modest furniture, candlesticks, and limited clothing, and who ate from pewter dishes, the silver whistle and chain were not a frivolous expense but rather constituted a privilege of his office.

The inventory of the tailor Simon Isam is dated to 22 March 1618.<sup>86</sup> His jewelled possessions are limited to a whistle and pick, both of silver, which along with a silver spoon are valued at 6s. A conservative estimate of the total number of goods that he owned on his death gives a figure of five hundred and eighty-four, listed under one hundred and thirty entries. As with previous inventories examined here an exact figure of the number of objects owned by Isam is difficult to come by, since, for example, it is impossible to know how many pieces of pewter he owned from the entry stating '35lb of peuter at 8d.' per pound. Taking the number of entries containing jewels as one and total entries as one hundred and thirty, Isam's jewels constitute 0.77% of his entire goods. If instead the very conservative estimate

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<sup>85</sup> NRO INV/16 no.135 cited in Reed, ed., *Ipswich Probate Inventories*, pp.51-52.

<sup>86</sup> NRO INV/29 no.29 cited in Reed, ed., *Ipswich Probate Inventories*, pp.93-97.

of total goods owned as five hundred and eighty-four is used and the whistle and toothpick are considered as individual items, then the proportion of jewels drops to 0.34%.

The final male inventory from this group that contains any items of jewellery is that of the clerk Richard Rainsford and this is dated to 14 June 1631.<sup>87</sup> Listed amongst the items in the cellar are two rings and these are valued at £1 10s. from an estate worth a total of £71 8s. 4d. Despite not having an inventory that is particularly lengthy, the goods that Rainsford owned seem to be worth relatively substantial amounts. Of all the Ipswich men discussed here Rainsford is by far the wealthiest and the types of goods he owned reflect both his wealth and more learned status. In his study is a 'Lybrarye of Bookes' worth £10, while 'His wearing aparell and gown and cassoks' are valued at £5, which is more than the clothing belonging to Barnes (£2), Nicholas (£4 10s.), and Isam (£2 6s.). Nevertheless, in line with his non-elite status and akin with his Ipswich counterparts, the vessels he uses for drinking and dining are still made of pewter: Rainsford's 'severall peeces pewter' are worth £2 10s.; Barnes owned '35 peces gret and small' to the value of £1 10s.; Nicholas was in possession of seventeen pewter items worth only 16s., though a drinking cup is listed separately along with two candlesticks and two salts totalling 2s.; while Isam seems to have owned no pewter but rather dishes and platters of wood. As with the above examples, trying to ascertain the exact proportion of jewelled goods that Rainsford owned is problematic. There are forty-seven items, with the '2 rings' constituting a single entry. This produces a result of 2.13%. If the highly underestimated figure of one hundred and sixty-one individual objects is used, with the rings classed separately, then the percentage rate drops to 1.24%.

It was noted earlier how the inventories of certain female Ipswich inhabitants could also reflect goods once owned by men. In the inventory for the widow Jane Ward (40), which is dated 27 May 1606 and worth a total of £47 14s. 7 ½d. there is listed a separate section for plate.<sup>88</sup> Pewter dishes are recorded earlier and so the presence of silver goods in small numbers would suggest that these were not used for dining, but were rather display plate.

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<sup>87</sup> NRO INV/37 Box 47 no.106 cited in Reed, ed., *Ipswich Probate Inventories*, pp.110-11.

<sup>88</sup> Reed, ed., *Ipswich Probate Inventories*, pp.65-68.

Item	£	s	d
Item i stone cruese with a small Lyppe and a fote of sylver at	0	4	0
Item i stone pott with a cover and lyppe of sylver at	0	10	0
Item xx silver sponnes wayinge xx oz at iiij s iiij d per oz	4	6	8
Item i silver salte with a cover A sylver Cuppe i small sylver pott beinge parcel gylte wayinge xxxvij ounces q at iiij s vj d per oz	8	7	7½
Item iij Gould Ryngs at	1	4	0

Table 3.3: Plate from the inventory of Jane Ward, widow, 27 May 1606

These items, along with the three gold rings, would have previously been the property of Ward's husband. As is so often the case with inventories though, a lack of description does not provide any information on the types of rings that these were. Although owned by Ward's husband, they may have been worn by Jane, but equally they may have been rings more suited for male use.

The inventories of certain Ipswich inhabitants clearly represent a less wealthy class of individual than the royal inventories or those of courtiers and London-based urban citizens. The proportion of jewelled goods owned by the group as a whole is remarkably low and of those in possession of jewels, these items comprise a small percentage of their entire inventoried estate. The inventories can never provide information about objects that were not present when the appraisers valued the goods of an individual and so any bequeathed goods alienated prior to an inventory being taken remain unknown. Given the highly personal nature of jewels, it is not beyond possibility that men would choose to pass on whatever little jewellery they owned to family and friends, removing them from these probate records.

To determine how representative these inventories are of ownership outside of wealthy London and court circles, it would be opportune to look at material from another centre. A published group of Bristol probate inventories for the period 1542 to 1650 offers one hundred and eight transcriptions, which the editors claim to be 'a representative sample of the occupations and social groups to be found within the Bristol inventories'.<sup>89</sup> Considering only those inventories that fall within the time period covered by this thesis gives a sample size of forty-four.<sup>90</sup> It would not, however, be inappropriate to discuss

<sup>89</sup> Edwin George and Stella George, eds., *Bristol Probate Inventories. Part 1: 1542-1650* (Bristol: Bristol Record Society, 2002), xi.

<sup>90</sup> The final inventory under consideration is that of a single woman, Katherine Ware, and is dated 8 November 1625.

selected inventories dated to after 1625, since they are still indicative of male ownership earlier in the seventeenth century.<sup>91</sup>

Of the forty-four inventories, forty represent men and this is a rate of 90.9%. Of these men only five possess any jewels that would appear to be personal items, which equates to 12.5% and this is not too dissimilar from the Ipswich material. Two inventories do include items that would be considered as jewellery but these would appear to be more indicative of a craftsman's stock. So the 'ij gould bands' and 'vij copper bands' recorded in the inventory of the haberdasher Robert Clement, dated to 19 March 1589, and 'thrid, buttens, pins, Laces, needles' from John Noble's 1625 inventory give no indication of male ownership.<sup>92</sup>

The men who owned personal jewels were George Baldwin, a gentleman; Francis Baylie, a clothworker; Nathaniel Wright, a haulier; Richard Woodson, a surgeon; and Michael Threkelle, a hosier.<sup>93</sup> With only Woodson as an exception, all these men owned at least one ring. Baldwin was in possession of three gold rings and this may be indicative of his higher status and wealth.<sup>94</sup> Woodson's inventory was taken on 11 February 1623 and, in addition to the surgical instruments associated with his occupation, he owned a set of 'Instruments of silver and trimmed with silver'.<sup>95</sup> These, along with 'one silver tooth picker', were valued at £3 18s. 4d. and were presumably status symbols. The single rings owned by Baylie, Wright, and Threkelle may have been signet rings stamped with their merchant's marks to assist these men as they conducted their daily business and so these objects had a practical function.<sup>96</sup>

Later inventories from this same corpus show that rings were the most frequently owned item of jewellery. Of the five pieces of jewellery present amongst the goods of the merchant Nathaniel Butcher, four are rings: 'two signett rings, a ringe with a blewe sapheire, a little hooped ringe & an old Jewell'.<sup>97</sup> An inventory taken of Richard Saunders' goods in the house of the widow Margaret Clements on 22 July 1629, sixteen days after the first appraisal, revealed that he owned one gold ring. A further addition to the inventory made on 9 September 1629 included 'one dozen of old silke, silver and gould poynts', 'one silver

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<sup>91</sup> The jewels of Nathaniel Butcher, merchant (inventory dated 25 November 1628), Richard Saunders, plumer (inventory dated 6 July 1629), and John Shipway, shoemaker (inventory dated 16 October 1634) will be discussed but these inventories do not form part of any statistical analysis.

<sup>92</sup> George and George, eds., *Bristol Probate Inventories*, pp.6, 56.

<sup>93</sup> George and George, eds., *Bristol Probate Inventories*, nos. 13, 24, 25, 27, 28.

<sup>94</sup> George and George, eds., *Bristol Probate Inventories*, p.18. Baldwin's inventory of 23 February 1614 shows that he was also in possession of silver and silver-gilt plate worth about £50.

<sup>95</sup> George and George, eds., *Bristol Probate Inventories*, p.36.

<sup>96</sup> For more on signet rings, including those with merchant's marks, see Chapter 8.

<sup>97</sup> George and George, eds., *Bristol Probate Inventories*, p.64.



bodkin', 'one old silke and silver hat band', 'one old small twist silke and silver hatt band', and 'one seale of silver with a boaning handle'.<sup>98</sup> The shoemaker John Shipway left behind 'two gold rings with a gilt gimmall Ringe'.<sup>99</sup>

The English scholar Catherine Richardson has recently examined a corpus of one thousand five hundred inventories from Kent for the period 1560 to 1600.<sup>100</sup> The Kent sample size is significantly larger than the Ipswich and Bristol material but Richardson's findings are similar, which suggests that the inventories analysed within this thesis are indicative of lower class ownership. Of the Kent inventories only 10% include jewellery, with nearly half of these having only one item.<sup>101</sup> While there is a range of goods represented, the most frequently owned items were rings and dress fastenings.<sup>102</sup> Looking specifically at male ownership, Richardson observes that three-quarters of the jewellery that men owned comprised of rings and that their other jewelled possessions included only whistles and silver or silver-gilt buttons.<sup>103</sup>

The inventories of men of a lower social status suggest that rings and small dress accessories were the most common items owned by them and this seems to be a reflection of what occurs at higher levels of society. As further indication of trends of ownership amongst the lower classes it is possible to turn to testamentary evidence. More than serving as a mere indicator of the types of goods a person owned, as manifest in inventories, bequests highlight the significance that bequeathed objects may have had for their male owners. Further, these documents provide crucial insight into the relationships forged throughout a man's lifetime. The memory of the deceased that was evoked in the bequeathing of material artefacts was intensified through the bequest of jewels, since the highly personal nature of such objects and the proximity to the body only served to increase the status of these gifts. Just as with gifts that circulated during someone's life, bequests could flow upwards, as well as downwards, and in a sideways movement. It is in humble terms that Stephen Gardiner (c.1495-1555), Bishop of Winchester, leaves to his superior, Cardinal Reginald Pole (1500-1558), a diamond

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<sup>98</sup> George and George, eds., *Bristol Probate Inventories*, p.71.

<sup>99</sup> George and George, eds., *Bristol Probate Inventories*, p.88.

<sup>100</sup> Catherine Richardson, "'As My Whole Trust Is in Him': Jewelry and the Quality of Early Modern Relationships" in *Ornamentation: The Art of Renaissance Accessories*, edited by M. Bella Mirabella, 182-201 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011). Richardson states that just over one third of the inventories are those of women – note 7.

<sup>101</sup> Richardson, "Jewelry", pp.183-84.

<sup>102</sup> Richardson notes that objects such as buttons, girdles, whistles, toothpicks, and earpicks are present in the inventories but over 60% of jewels are rings and almost 20% are dress fastenings – Richardson, "Jewelry", pp.183-84.

<sup>103</sup> Richardson, "Jewelry", p.184. She also notes that for women, just over half of their jewelled possessions included rings, while almost one third were dress fastenings.

ring: 'Item, I bequeathe to my Lord Legates grace a ring with a dyamounte, not so bigge as he is wourthie to have, but such as his poore orator is able to geve.'<sup>104</sup> The elevated status of William Cecil (1520/1-1598), first Baron Burghley, is equally apparent when a bequest he receives from Richard Cox (c.1500-1581), Bishop of Ely, is more than those bestowed upon other individuals, even though they were each entrusted with being overseers of his will.

And I doe give to my good Lorde Treasurer for a memoriall of my good will towards him a Ringe of golde weying twoe ounces And to Sir William Cardell and Doctor Leedes for a memoriall of my good will towards them eche of them a Ringe of golde of the weighte of one ounce and one halfe hartely praying them all.<sup>105</sup>

A group of wills related to the diocese of London dating from 1492 to 1547 provides insight into the 'thought, environment and possessions of ordinary middle-class men and women of the early Tudor period'.<sup>106</sup> In all, two hundred and forty-five wills are published and they are in two distinct groups: those from the register Palmer, covering the date range 1492 to 1520; and separate wills dating 1507 to 1547.<sup>107</sup> The wills from the register Palmer number ninety-five and eighty-six of these are those of religious figures who owned few personal possessions. Of the Palmer wills, only nine show ownership of jewels.<sup>108</sup> In the will of Richard Stokley, a chantry priest, dated to 27 May 1513 he leaves 'two gold rynges' to a female cousin but it would appear that this is a return of a pledge that she had given to him.<sup>109</sup> Two wills record only girdles that are 'harnest' or 'harnessid' with silver and these are both left to male recipients.<sup>110</sup> The remaining six wills document the owning of rings and dress accessories by these men.

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<sup>104</sup> John Gough Nichols and John Bruce, eds., *Wills from Doctor's Commons. A Selection from the Wills of Eminent Persons Proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 1495-1695*, vol. 83 (London: The Camden Society, 1863), p.42.

<sup>105</sup> "Will of Richard Cox, Bishop of Ely", 20 April 1581, The National Archives, PROB 11/63/419, ff.232r-233v, f.233v. See also John Strype, *Annals of the Reformation and Establishment of Religion and Other Various Occurrences in the Church of England; During the First Twelve Years of Queen Elizabeth's Happy Reign*, 2nd ed., 4 vols. (London: printed by and for Thomas Edlin, 1725), vol.3, Chapter III, anno 1581, p.26 where he also gives values for the rings, stating that Burghley's ring was worth £6 and the others were worth £4 10s.

<sup>106</sup> Ida Darlington, ed. *London Consistory Court Wills 1492-1547*, vol. 3 (London: London Record Society, 1967), ix. In this period the diocese of London covered the City of London, Middlesex, Essex, and the majority of Hertfordshire.

<sup>107</sup> Greater London Record Office (GLRO), DLC/354 (register Palmer); GLRO DLC/418 cited in Darlington, ed., *LCC Wills*.

<sup>108</sup> Darlington, ed., *LCC Wills*, nos.7, 12, 30, 51, 58, 65, 68, 83, 86.

<sup>109</sup> Darlington, ed., *LCC Wills*, p.5.

<sup>110</sup> Darlington, ed., *LCC Wills*, pp.30, 35.

The chaplain Robert Steyll, whose will is dated 1 August 1510, bequeaths two silver clasps to one of his executors and a silver clasp with a crucifix to a fellow chaplain.<sup>111</sup> On 11 June 1516 the clerk Robert Andrewes leaves to one of his two executors, Thomas Rocheford, a citizen and grocer of London, ‘my ryng of gold with a safure abalas’ and ‘my wrathed ryng of gold with a balas therin’.<sup>112</sup> Two taches of silver-gilt seem to be the only personal jewels belonging to the parson Thomas Awsten when he made his will on 10 July 1518; while it appears that in August 1518 Thomas Belamy owned only one tache of silver.<sup>113</sup> The will dated 23 May 1518 of the clerk Thomas Everade contains no bequests of jewels but the document concludes ‘in wittenesse whereof to this my testament I have sett my seale’.<sup>114</sup> This is clear evidence that Everade owned a personal sealing device, though its form is not explicit and it may have been a ring or a hand-held device. The final will from the register Palmer that shows male ownership of jewellery is that of John Hudson and it is dated 19 June 1519.<sup>115</sup> While jewels such as ‘a crosse of gold’ and ‘a nowch [clasp or brooch] of gold’ feature, by far the most numerous jewelled item bequeathed is the ring: Sir John Larke receives ‘a howpe of gold with a saffers face’; he leaves ‘a ryng of gold with a rubye’ to Sir Henry Clerkson; the wife of Jamys Wilkynson receives ‘a ring of gold with a saffiewr’; Thomas Parker’s wife is left ‘a hoope of gold’; Robert Mannyng’s wife is left ‘a ring of gold with subscription on the inside’; the wife of another Hudson from the parish of St Alborough receives ‘a rynge of gold with a rubie’; and William Percevall’s wife is in receipt of ‘a ryng of gold with 2 stonys in itt, the ton a rubye and the other an emerodd’.

Of the remaining one hundred and fifty wills only twenty-two of these contain any jewelled possessions, with thirteen of them being made by male testators.<sup>116</sup> Of these thirteen male-authored wills, ten conclude with a variation on the term ‘I have putto my seale’, which is clear indication of a sealing device either in the form of a ring or a hand-held seal. Only two of these self-sealed wills include additional bequests of jewels, indicating greater ownership of jewelled possessions. These are the wills of William Turke, a haberdasher and citizen of London, and Wylliam Chambarlayn, a skinner and citizen of London. Their wills are dated 14 August 1541 and 20 May 1542, respectively.<sup>117</sup> Turke leaves a ‘ryng of golde of

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<sup>111</sup> Darlington, ed., *LCC Wills*, p.8.

<sup>112</sup> Darlington, ed., *LCC Wills*, p.18.

<sup>113</sup> Darlington, ed., *LCC Wills*, pp.38, 40.

<sup>114</sup> Darlington, ed., *LCC Wills*, p.48.

<sup>115</sup> Darlington, ed., *LCC Wills*, pp.50-51.

<sup>116</sup> Darlington, ed., *LCC Wills*, nos.108, 116, 118, 120, 125, 126, 130, 131, 135, 148, 209, 213, 230.

<sup>117</sup> Darlington, ed., *LCC Wills*, nos. 148, 230.

the value of 20s.’ to the overseer of his will along with a black gown.<sup>118</sup> Presumably, since these gifts were for his ‘paynes’ in undertaking his duty, the noting of the monetary value of the ring was necessary to express Turke’s gratitude. Chambarlayn’s bequests include two for rings: ‘a byge houpe off gollde’ and ‘a golde rynge with a dyamond’.<sup>119</sup> The three wills that contain jewelled bequests but not a sealing device include one of a certain Mr Pope, who does not itemise any goods but only leaves his entire property, including his ‘jewelles’ to his son Thomas Wylkockes.<sup>120</sup> On 28 December 1538 Wyllam Symons, a merchant taylor of London, leaves to two nieces ‘a peyre of bedes of corall dobull gawdyd with sylver’ and ‘a peyre of black bedes of get gawdyd with sylver’.<sup>121</sup> Only the will of the surgeon Antony Copage, which is dated 14 December 1537, seems to tally with what we have come to expect of male ownership in this period, for he leaves ‘mye rynge’ and ‘the ryng that is a ponne my fynger’ to the brother of Doctor Laye and Thomas Austyn’s wife, respectively.<sup>122</sup>

Through these documents of less wealthy men – the bequests of London citizens and the inventories of Ipswich inhabitants – it is clear that small proportions of men did own jewellery but the jewels they owned were small. Nonetheless they were highly significant to the men who owned and used them. The silver buttons that the Ipswich sailor Edward Barnes possessed were presumably worn on special occasions, and removed from his clothing when he was at sea. The silver whistle and chain owned by the mariner Matthew Nicholas were most likely associated with his occupation and perhaps reflect an elevated position that he held. The tailor Simon Isam also owned a silver whistle, as well as a silver pick (presumably a toothpick). These were possibly items of status, for a silver toothpick seems a particularly extravagant expense. It is unsurprising that the clerk Richard Rainsford owned two rings and one of these may have been a signet ring, to assist him with his duties. The rhetoric of wills often hints at the status of these objects, such as with Robert Andrewes’s bequest to Thomas Rocheford of two gem-set gold rings referred to by use of a possessive adjective and not an indefinite article.

### 3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has looked a very wide range of owners and the evidence for their jewels. The inventory of Henry VIII is undoubtedly the largest of those examined here and it contains a

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<sup>118</sup> Darlington, ed., *LCC Wills*, p.82.

<sup>119</sup> Darlington, ed., *LCC Wills*, p.143.

<sup>120</sup> Darlington, ed., *LCC Wills*, no.135.

<sup>121</sup> Darlington, ed., *LCC Wills*, no.116, p.66.

<sup>122</sup> Darlington, ed., *LCC Wills*, no.108, p.61.

vast range of goods, in terms of quality and quantity. His jewelled possessions reflect his wealth and status but so do too the goods of William Herbert, a successful and wealthy courtier. In terms of the number of entries containing jewels, buttons are the most numerous (though not necessarily the most valuable) object of Henry VIII, William Herbert, and Henry Howard. The second most common item, based on number of entries, for these three men are rings. For Thomas Ramsey rings comprise the largest proportion of his jewelled possessions. In his case, he has no buttons listed in his inventory, not even amongst his wearing apparel. It may well be that the buttons he wore were integral to his garments and were made of silk or some other fabric. This is perhaps indicative of his status. He was an urban citizen, albeit a relatively wealthy one who held a civic position, and not a courtier. It would seem that gold buttons were the reserve of the elite. Certainly contemporary sumptuary legislation would seem to suggest that this was more appropriate.

Sumptuary legislation was designed to restrict the consumption of certain types of goods to particular classes. An increase in the availability of luxury goods, due to an increase in commerce and a greater amount of wealth available to non-elites within the early modern period, meant that it was necessary to impose laws to maintain degrees of distinction. Unsurprisingly, clothing and adornment were often the focus of these laws, since these had the ability to subvert social mores and undermine systems of hierarchy. Legislation, then, seemed to concern itself with ensuring that people dressed according to their status.<sup>123</sup> Martha C. Howell observes that ‘men were every bit as devoted to extravagant dress as women were. Indeed, most laws showed more concern with men’s dress than with women’s’.<sup>124</sup> This certainly seems to be true in the case of a proclamation issued by Elizabeth on 12 February 1565 due to the ‘excesse in Apparell, both contrary to the Lawes of the Realm, and to the Disordre and Confusion of the Degrees of all States (wherin alwayes diversity of Apparell hath taken place) and fynally to the Subversion of all good Ordre’.<sup>125</sup> This document cites earlier laws set out in the reigns of Henry VIII and Mary I (r.1553-1558) and adds new regulations from Elizabeth, such as the following:

It is funder ordrid, That no Man under the Degree of a Barons eldist Sonne, except that he be of the Ordre of the Garter, or of the Pryvy Counsell, or that may dispend fyve

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<sup>123</sup> Martha C. Howell, *Commerce before Capitalism in Europe, 1300-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p.221. See also pp.208-60.

<sup>124</sup> Howell, *Commerce before Capitalism*, p.220.

<sup>125</sup> John Strype, *Annals of the Reformation and Establishment of Religion, and Other Various Occurrences in the Church of England; During the First Twelve Years of Queen Elizabeth's Happy Reign* (London: printed for John Wyat, 1709), Appendix, pp.13-17, p.13.

hundred Marks by Yere for Tearme of Lyfe in Possession above all Charges, shall weare any Velvet, or Sattin, or any Stuffe of lyke or greater Price in the Upperstocks of his Hose, or in any part therof; or shall garnishe the same with any Embroderye, or any Fringe, Lace, or Passemayn of Gold, Silver, or Silke, nor any other Garnishing with any Silke, except it be for the stitching of the upper part to the Lying. Nor shall weare any manner or silke Netherstocks of Hosen, nor any Carsey or other Things made out of the Queens Majesties Domynions.<sup>126</sup>

Clearly the concern was that dress had the ability to form an identity and that, in the wearing of certain fabrics, distinctions of class and rank would be disrupted. These laws were nonetheless prescriptive and whilst they are indicative of what was prohibited, they usually stemmed from a need to curb habits that were being practised.

The numbers of jewelled goods belonging to the Ipswich inhabitants are smaller and this is a trend seen in Bristol and Kent. On the whole these inventories comprise a smaller number of appraised goods and, as such, any jewellery listed is more remarkable. This is a similar story with the bequeathed goods of London citizens. Nevertheless, it is the inventories of wealthier individuals from both urban and court contexts that are impressive not only for the scale but also for the variety and quality of the goods within them. This chapter has sought to present information on the jewelled possessions recorded in the inventories and wills of a range of men from the early modern period, to show that men owned jewellery. While at lower levels of society ownership of a gold ring was significant in creating distinction, it is important to reflect more on the fact that a glittering garment was indicative of the highest status as much as jewels for more elite men.

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<sup>126</sup> Strype, *Annals* (1709), Appendix, p.15.

## Section 2

### Male dress and ornamentation

In a period when anxieties prevailed over the excessive ornamentation of the male body, there is no doubt that most men were actively interested in making such purchases and in ensuring the safe-keeping and transmission of these valuable goods. Contemporary texts were often confusing in the advice that they gave to men. Pamphlets were produced that instructed people on the benefits of thrift over extravagance.<sup>1</sup> The rector William Harrison (1535-1593) bemoaned the excesses of appearance, for such desire was seen as detrimental to one's character.

Nothing is more constant in England than inconstancy of attire. Oh, how much cost is bestowed nowadays upon our bodies and how little upon our souls! How many suits of apparel hath the one, and how little furniture hath the other! How long time is asked in decking up of the first, and how little space left wherein to feed the latter!<sup>2</sup>

While Harrison is not explicit here in expressing how his contemporaries proceeded in 'decking up' their bodies, his words rail against such preferment of bettering one's external self than the internal.

Similar concerns over outward appearance prevailed on the Continent and advice on the suitable clothing for a courtier is offered in Baldassare Castiglione's *Il Libro del Cortegiano* (1528), which ties in with ideas of avoidance of excesses: 'I would like our courtier's whole outfit to be clean and delicate and to have a certain conformity of modest attire, but not however, of a vain or feminine nature'.<sup>3</sup> However, towards the end of this speech, the same speaker in this dialogue, Federico Fregoso, acknowledges the social value of dress in the sixteenth century and crucially this is essential to understanding early modern attitudes towards clothing and jewels. The appearance of an individual reflected on his character and, ultimately, his reception by others.

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<sup>1</sup> See Thomas Tusser, *The Five Hundred Good Points of Husbandry* (1557), pp.14, 18-19 cited in Craig Muldrew, "Interpreting the Market: The Ethics of Credit and Community Relations in Early Modern England," *Social History* 18, no. 2 (May, 1993): 163-83, p.179.

<sup>2</sup> William Harrison, *The Description of England. The Classic Contemporary Account of Tudor Social Life*, edited by Georges Edelen (Washington DC; New York: The Folger Shakespeare Library; Dover Publications, 1994), p.146.

<sup>3</sup> 'voglio che 'l nostro cortegiano in tutto l'abito sia pulito e delicato ed abbia una certa conformità di modesta attillatura ma non però di maniera femminile o vana' – Baldassare Castiglione, *Il Libro Del Cortegiano*, edited by Giulio Preti (Turin: Giulio Einaudi Editore, 1965), book II, chapter 27, p.65.

He should decide within himself how he wishes to appear and how he would like to be esteemed, through his clothing, and make sure that his clothing helps him to be seen as such even by those who do not hear him speak or act.<sup>4</sup>

This same paradox is expressed by the early seventeenth-century writer Patrick Scot in *Omnibus & singulis* (1619), intended to serve as an advice book from a father to his son.

There is nothing whereby the inward disposition of the minde may bee sooner discovered, then by lighteness or stayednesse of apparell; a phantasticall attyre being a confirmation of an unsettled minde. I doe advise you, not to follow the frantike humours of new Fashions, neither to bee superstitiously, basely, slightly clothed, nor artificially decked; but to vse your clothes in a cleanly, honest, comely, and carelesse forme. [...] it is an equal indiscretion to estimate a man's worth, either by his bodie or clothes; yet on the other side it is an ineuitable certaintie, that not only the common people and strangers, but euen wisemen are mooued and stirred vp with outward shewes, and their minde (according to those exterior things) prepared to receiue a deepe impression of liking or disliking, fauour, or disfauour, reuerence or carelesse retchlesnesse.<sup>5</sup>

Negotiating the difficult path between appropriate external manifestations and excessive consumption was challenging and potentially hazardous, as too little outward show could reflect poorly on a man's character and impact on his good-standing in the community, but conversely negative opinions could be formed from overt displays. This second view is articulated effectively by the author Robert Greene, in his role as arbitrator in a duel of words between the characters identified only as Cloth Breeches and Velvet Breeches. He describes seeing the figure of a man approaching them.

Apparelled, in a blacke Taffata doublet, and a spruce Leather Jerkin, with Christall buttons, a Cloake fac't afore with Ueluet, and a Couentry cap of the [...]nest wooll: [...] This fiery fac't Churle had upon his fingers as many gold Rings as would furnish a Goldsmiths shop, or beseeme a Pandor of long profession to weare.<sup>6</sup>

It emerges that this character is a pawnbroker, and so clearly the author is commenting that only a man of disrepute would choose to clothe and adorn himself in such a fashion.

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<sup>4</sup> 'che debba fra se stesso deliberar ciò che vol parere e di quella sorte che desidera esser estimado, della medesima vestirsi, e far che gli abiti lo aiutino ad esser tenuto per tale ancor da quelli che non l'odono parlare, né veggono far operazione alcuna' – Castiglione, *Cortegiano*, book II, chapter 27, p.65.

<sup>5</sup> Patrick Scot, *Omnibus & Singulis. Affording Matter Profitable for All Men, Necessary for Euery Man; Alluding to a Fathers Advice or Last Will to His Sonne. Now Published for the Use of All Men, and Particularly of Those That Doe Inhabit Greate Britaine and Ireland* (London: printed by William Stansby, 1619), G2v-G3v.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Greene, *A Quip for an Upstart Courtier: Or a Quaint Dispute Betweene Veluet Breeches and Cloth Breeches. Wherein Is Plainely Set Downe the Disorders in All Estates and Trades* (1583), D1r.



However, the use of fashionable clothing and jewels could be employed to one's benefit. Thomas A. King in *The Gendering of Men* (2004) locates the figure of the courtier in a position of subjection to the sovereign. Sartorial display became a necessary means to attract the favour of the prince. Emulative practice in consumption of dress and jewels was therefore both flattering to the sovereign and helped establish a courtier's place within court hierarchies.<sup>7</sup> Axiomatic is the paradoxical attitude towards consumption of dress and jewels throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. There was an inherent desire to adorn one's self and this was articulated not just through clothing and fabrics, but also with jewels. Despite these concerns, men did participate in this aspect of material culture. This section locates adornment on the male body, reconnecting jewellery with dress. Buttons, points, hooks, and other small wares were designed to be portable; they were easily transferred from one garment to another or taken off to act as currency or as a pawn.

In his 1660 multi-lingual dictionary *Lexicon Tetraglotton*, the historian and political writer James Howell (1594?-1666) included a section entitled 'Habits, or Apparel for Men'.<sup>8</sup> This proves a valuable resource for it enables a modern reader to ascertain which items of clothing and accessories were considered appropriate for a man within the seventeenth century. One entry is particularly worth noting for the very fact that while it does not name a specific object type, it describes the possible state of a man's overall appearance as 'Embroidered with Jewels'. The Italian and French translations use words that suggest a visual assault to the eyes: 'tempestato [...] tutto di gioie, ò gemme'; '[...] tout couvert de pierriere' – literally studded all over with jewels and gemstones.

There is, of course, nothing new about the use of clothing and jewels as a mode of self-expression and this can be witnessed as far back as the Bronze Age. Paul Treherne has conducted a study of the figure of the male warrior, while Marie Louise Stig Sørensen has investigated the construction of identity in this early prehistoric setting.<sup>9</sup> Sørensen's concept is of the 'readability' of appearance as 'it contains codes that can be investigated'.<sup>10</sup> At the other end of the chronological scale, Simon Fraser has assessed how American rap artists

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<sup>7</sup> Thomas A. King, *The Gendering of Men: 1600-1750* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008), pp.50-55.

<sup>8</sup> James Howell, *Lexicon Tetraglotton, an English-French-Italian-Spanish Dictionary: Whereunto Is Adjoined a Large Nomenclature of the Proper Terms (in All the Four) Belonging to Several Arts and Sciences, to Recreations, to Professions Both Liberal and Mechanik, &C. Divided into Fiftie Two Sections; with Another Volume of the Choicest Proverbs* (London: J.G. for Cornelius Bee, 1660), section xxxiii.

<sup>9</sup> Paul Treherne, "The Warrior's Beauty: The Masculine Body and Self-Identity in Bronze-Age Europe", *Journal of European Archaeology* 3, no. 1 (1995): 105-44; Marie Louise Stig Sørensen, "Reading Dress: The Construction of Social Categories and Identities in Bronze Age Europe", *Journal of European Archaeology* 5, no. 1 (1997): 92-113.

<sup>10</sup> Sørensen, "Reading Dress", p.93.

have introduced the appropriation of certain types of jewellery amongst young males, to be readily identifiable as a distinct group.<sup>11</sup>

The early modern period was certainly no different in this respect. The authors Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass discuss the connotation behind the word 'investiture', defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as 'the action of clothing or robing', and state that it was 'the means by which a person was given a form, a shape, a social function'.<sup>12</sup> Whilst Jones and Stallybrass focus more specifically on dress than on jewels, they note that their ideas can be translated to almost any item that is worn on the body.<sup>13</sup>

In a satirical comment on the way in which the Englishman fashioned himself in various foreign ways but had no distinct identity to call English, the physician Andrew Boorde (c.1490-1549) observed how the male image could be constructed. Boorde's view on the figure of the Englishman is of a naked individual carrying shears and cloth, able to fashion himself according to his changing whims and desires.<sup>14</sup> The underlying fear expressed is of a threat to national identity, aided by an influx of foreign goods, an idea that was developed by Sir Thomas Smith (1513-1577) in his *Discourse of the Commonweal* (published 1581).<sup>15</sup>

In his noted 1583 publication *The Anatomie of Abuses*, the English puritan writer Philip Stubbes (c.1555-after 1610) condemns the sinful nature of apparel. For Stubbes it is the 'wearyng of Apparrell more gorgeous, su[m]ptuous, and precious the[n] our state, callinge, or condition of life requireth' that leads to pride.<sup>16</sup> Jones and Stallybrass have

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<sup>11</sup> Simon Fraser, "Men and Jewellery", lecture given at the Society of Jewellery Historians, London, 25 September 2007.

<sup>12</sup> "investiture, n.". OED Online. March 2012. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/99050?redirectedFrom=investiture> (accessed 20 March 2012); Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.2.

<sup>13</sup> Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, p.3. For more recent works in support of this view see the various essays in Catherine Richardson, ed., *Clothing Culture, 1350-1650* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2004) particularly Catherine Richardson, 'Introduction', pp.1-25; Roze Hentschell, 'A Question of Nation: Foreign Clothes on the English Subject', pp.49-62; Tessa Storey, 'Clothing Courtesans: Fabrics, Signals, and Experiences', pp.95-107; Claire Bartrum, 'Social Fabric in Thynne's *Debate Between Pride and Lowliness*', pp.137-49; and Maria Hayward, 'Fashion, Finance, Foreign Politics and the Wardrobe of Henry VIII', pp.165-78.

<sup>14</sup> Andrew Boorde, *The Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge* (London: Wyllyam Copland, 1562), A3v.

<sup>15</sup> See Sir Thomas Smith (attributed), *A Discourse of the Commonweal of This Realm of England*, edited by Mary Dewar, (Charlottesville: Published for the Folger Shakespeare Library by the University Press of Virginia, 1969). According to Hazel Forsyth this text did have the desired impact and from the late-sixteenth century there seemed to be a marked shift towards greater domestic production – Hazel Forsyth, "Keeping up Appearances: A Few Finds from the Foreshore", paper given at "Heavy Metal and Dirty Deeds: Buttons, Hooks & Other Dress Accessories", Museum of London, London, 10 March 2012.

<sup>16</sup> Philip Stubbes, *The Anatomie of Abuses* (London: printed by Richard Jones, 1585), C1.

understood his words to mean that clothing ‘has the power to constitute an essence’.<sup>17</sup> The poet and administrator Edmund Spenser (1552?-1599), writing towards the end of the sixteenth century, also promoted the notion that a man’s clothing affected his behaviour – ‘their conditions are oftentimes governed by their garments [...] there is not little in the garment to the fashioning of the minde and conditions’.<sup>18</sup> In Europe too these ideas were present and following a visit by the Italian humanist Gian Giorgio Trissino (1478-1550) to the *studiolo* and *grotta* of the marchioness of Mantua Isabella d’Este (1474-1539) he chose to describe her character in terms of her personal adornment:

Her true liberality can be understood by the splendour of her dress, the magnificent décor of the house, and by the beautiful – one might almost say, divine – fabrics with which the whole is adorned.<sup>19</sup>

Portraiture also relied on assumptions that an individual’s outward appearance had the ability to convey information about the sitter’s inner state. Lawrence Stone has noted that, ‘Noblemen and gentlemen wanted above all formal family portraits [...] symptoms of the frenzied status-seeking and ancestor worship of the age. What patrons demanded was evidence of the sitter’s position and wealth by opulence of dress, ornament and background’.<sup>20</sup> Convention demanded that it was the accoutrements of a portrait that provided clues as to the identity, occupation, and status of the sitter.<sup>21</sup>

Jones and Stallybrass have identified that the commissioning of a portrait was often undertaken to commemorate key moments in an individual’s life. They discuss the transformation that is recorded: ‘a monarch into an icon, a courtier into the queen’s champion, an English aristocrat into a Persian ambassador, a citizen into a gentleman’.<sup>22</sup> More important than the likeness of the face were the clothing and jewels, for they had the ability to construct the individual’s external, and by extension internal, frame.

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<sup>17</sup> Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, p.3.

<sup>18</sup> Edmund Spenser, Andrew Hadfield, and Willy Maley, *A View of the State of Ireland: From the First Printed Edition (1633)* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), pp.72-73 cited in Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, p.4.

<sup>19</sup> Lisa Jardine, *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998), p.413.

<sup>20</sup> Lawrence Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), p.712 cited in Robert Tittler, "Civic Portraiture and Political Culture in English Provincial Towns, ca.1560-1640", *The Journal of British Studies* 37, no. 3, Controlling (Mis)Behaviour: Medieval and Early Modern Perspectives (Jul., 1998): 306-29, p.311.

<sup>21</sup> For information on the politics of portraiture and the use of clothing and accessories in Tudor and Jacobean paintings see Maurice Howard, *The Tudor Image* (London: Tate Publishing Ltd, 1995) and Tarnya Cooper, *A Guide to Tudor & Jacobean Portraits* (London: National Portrait Gallery Publications, 2008).

<sup>22</sup> Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, p.34.

According to Patricia Fumerton the noted limner Nicholas Hilliard (1547?-1619) merely used the face as a background for the ornaments, over which he took great pains to represent as accurately as possible.<sup>23</sup> Fumerton also highlights the fact that Hilliard created new techniques within his painted miniature that allowed him to replicate accurately the gemstones and precious metals of jewelled objects.<sup>24</sup> It was perhaps Hilliard's training as a goldsmith that prompted him to take such care of the ornamentation within the frame, but the detailed representations of these decorative features reflects an understanding by Hilliard that 'the outer layers of artifice and ornament in a limning were the unavoidable thoroughfare to the inner, truthful self'.<sup>25</sup> Within this period then the identity of an individual represented and immortalised through portraiture was essentially 'composed through textiles and jewels, [it was] fashioned by clothes'.<sup>26</sup> Thus jewelled objects on the surface are not mere ornamentation in paint, just as they were not mere ornamentation when worn on the body.

The first chapter within this section examines the use of small-scale dress ornaments, such as buttons, clasps, and other dress fastenings. By the sixteenth century male dress required numerous mechanisms for holding the various parts of a garment together. Buttons allowed for tight, form-fitting closings and could be found on doublets, sleeves, and breeches. Parts of a man's garments including breeches, doublets, stockings, and sleeves were attached with ribbons or strings which required aglets to ease their passage into openings while hooks and pins formed similar functions. Even when ties were replaced with hooks, garments still displayed elaborate ribbons on their exterior. Whether or not they had a practical function, the decorative nature of many surviving examples of such objects indicates that they that were worn as embellishments while their frequency within elite inventories indicates that they were often amongst a gentleman's most valued possessions. But when worn only in combination with items of dress, these objects are often appended to works on dress history and ignored within the context of jewellery.

Amongst the most elaborate of these decorative items, worn at all levels of society but with very different levels of craftsmanship and materials were the badges attached to men's hats, a discussion of which forms the second chapter in this section. The history of the hat

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<sup>23</sup> Patricia Fumerton, *Cultural Aesthetics: Renaissance Literature and the Practice of Social Ornament* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp.78-79.

<sup>24</sup> Fumerton, *Cultural Aesthetics*, p.78.

<sup>25</sup> Fumerton, *Cultural Aesthetics*, p.80.

<sup>26</sup> Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, p.35. Jones and Stallybrass point out that very often the clothing and jewels worn by a sitter were rented, a practice which can be evidenced in the seventeenth-century post-mortem inventory of the Dutch painter Johannes Vermeer (1632-1675) that lists clothing identifiable in his paintings – Jones and Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing*, p.40.

ornament is a pan-European one and so the focus of this chapter shifts from England to consider this wider Continental fashion. Many of these ornaments for the hat are emblematic in nature and those that are not nevertheless demonstrate either political allegiances, religious affiliation, or offer some indication about the identity of the wearer. There is sufficient extant material evidence to indicate that these types of jewels, which were affixed to hats and clothing, were worn by men of differing social classes. This allows for an investigation into the elite and non-elite wearing of jewels. In turn this suggests that jewels held multiple meanings for their owners; and while monetary value cannot be underestimated, these jewels also had key religious, political, and social connotations.

## Chapter 4

### Embellishing male dress

#### 4.1 Introduction



Figure 4.1: Edward VI; unknown artist; c.1547. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 5511.

From top to bottom, elite men's clothing was studded with metallic, decorative items. This painting of Edward VI (r.1547-1553), believed to have been made shortly after his accession, shows clearly some of the different types of jewel that could be worn by men in this period (fig.4.1). The young king's cap is decorated with a number of jewels: small gold, rectangular pieces that are each set with a precious gemstone, possibly a ruby, encircle the hat; gold tags are sewn between these gem-set jewels; three pairs of gold aglets are visible at the base of the cap; and a larger, oval-shaped medallion to which is affixed a feather completes the embellishment at the top of the body. Edward displays proudly around his neck the collar and

George pendant associated with the Order of the Garter, while he holds in his right hand a sheathed, gilded dagger. Where there is slashing to his richly embroidered red cloak this has been fastened with pairs of tags or laces.

The aglets that have been placed in pairs around the base of Edward's cap may have been similar to a very recent Treasure find from the Thames foreshore (figs.4.2-4.3). It was identified by Hazel Forsyth, Senior Curator Post Medieval at the Museum of London, who has noted that aglets were purely decorative items, worn in pairs to embellish hats and doublets.<sup>1</sup> This particular piece takes on the form of a cylinder with ridged and grooved decoration that tapers slightly to its closed end. A band of pellets circles the open end. The closed end terminates in a filigree cage shaped like a six-petalled flower. It has an overall length of 14.17mm, with a diameter of 3.98mm and width at its open end of 5.08mm, and it weighs 0.54 grams.



Figure 4.2: Detail from portrait of Edward VI (NPG 5511) showing the various types of hat ornaments, including the pairs of aglets at the base of the cap.



Figure 4.3: Gold aglet with ridge and pellet decoration, found in Greenwich, Greater London; England; first half of sixteenth century. Treasure ID: 2011 T44.

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<sup>1</sup> Treasure report for 2011 T44, post-medieval gold aglet, found in Greenwich, Greater London.

Pictorial representations of royal figures such as Edward VI and courtiers like Sir Christopher Hatton (c.1540-1591) make it clear that the decorative objects they wore were probably made of gold (fig.4.4).



Figure 4.4: Sir Christopher Hatton; unknown; seventeenth century (1589). National Portrait Gallery, NPG 2162.

Hatton wears an oval-shaped emblematic hat jewel placed prominently at the front of his cap, while the base of the cap is set all around with gold, square-shaped ornaments alternately studded with a diamond and ruby. Additionally, Hatton's cloak is covered all over with hooks which provide ornamentation to the otherwise plain, black fabric. Comparable silver and silver-gilt examples of dress accessories that have been reported as Treasure provide evidence in favour of this fashion being accessed by men outside the elite courtly sphere through cheaper versions.

This chapter focuses on those objects that embellished male clothing within this period. Since many of these objects, such as buttons, dress-hooks, tags, and aglets, are considered as appendages to dress, they have been studied typically within the context of dress history. Nonetheless, these objects were usually the product of goldsmiths' work; they were transferable between clothing and thus constitute personal adornment. However, for the most part they do not appear in publications on jewellery history. The noted historian Maria Hayward is one of the few scholars to have paid careful attention to these objects, since they



are often found within inventory listings of clothing and textiles that she uses in her work.<sup>2</sup> In this chapter, I attempt to reconnect dress accessories to both the male body and to the broader context of the jewellery that men wore. By using finds reported as Treasure to the British Museum it is possible to demonstrate that these glittering, decorative jewels were adopted by a broader section of the male population than is perhaps suggested by portraiture and inventories of wealthy individuals. Archaeological data is also integrated through the use of base-metal objects recorded within the Portable Antiquities Scheme database. Indeed, archaeological finds from London, in stratified and non-stratified contexts, continue to reveal just how ubiquitous these objects were within the early modern period.

The numerous records of ornaments that literally fell off the clothing of Elizabeth I (r.1558-1603) between 1561 and 1585 show the ease with which such items could become detached from clothing.<sup>3</sup> This explains the many frequent finds of dress accessories in both archaeological and non-stratified contexts, such as those reported through Treasure. Although these types of objects were easily lost, references to these small-scale jewels in the wills and inventories of early modern men and women underscore their importance as personal goods. They suggest broader meanings for their owners than a purely monetary value. While there is sufficient evidence to show that these small-scale embellishments were worn by both sexes, this chapter seeks specifically to understand what these objects meant to their often overlooked male owners.

## 4.2 Jewelled dress accessories

All manner of ornaments could decorate the clothing of men within the early modern period. Many dress fastenings were worn by women: items such as pins are typically gendered as female, but the focus here is on male use. Many objects were functional in nature, since this was a period when clothing was made of detachable parts. These parts were held together by buttons, pins, points, ribbons, and hooks and eyes.<sup>4</sup> Some accessories were merely ornamental and appear to have no practical use and this is evidenced by the embellishments that cover Hatton's cloak (fig.4.4). Those ornaments that do have a functional use can be

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<sup>2</sup> Maria Hayward, ed., *The 1542 Inventory of Whitehall: The Palace and Its Keeper*, 2 vols. (London: Illuminata Publishers for the Society of Antiquaries of London, 2004); Maria Hayward, *Dress at the Court of King Henry VIII* (Leeds, UK: Maney Publishing, 2007); Maria Hayward, *Rich Apparel: Clothing and the Law in Henry VIII's England* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

<sup>3</sup> Janet Arnold, ed., *'Lost from Her Majesty's Back': Items of Clothing and Jewels Lost or Given Away by Queen Elizabeth I between 1561 and 1585, Entered in One of the Day Books Kept for the Records of the Wardrobe of Robes* (The Costume Society, 1980).

<sup>4</sup> Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.24.

termed collectively as ‘dress-fastenings’, since they did serve some use in holding together clothing. However the term ‘dress accessories’ allows for a wider remit. Nevertheless, this is still limiting for it fails to acknowledge that these items were in fact jewelled possessions. Evidence cited earlier from the records of the Court of Wardens of Goldsmiths’ Hall shows that these objects were the products of a goldsmith’s output. They could be removed and circulated between clothing and documentary evidence shows that they were bequeathed, which in turns suggests that they had an emotional value and attachment to their owners.

The evidence provided in the accounts of Elizabeth’s jewels that were lost gives evidence of the types of objects that were worn on the body using clothing as a foil. This source is also a useful indicator of the types of jewels appropriate for a royal body. The manuscript details the items that left the Wardrobe of the Robes, which was a small subdivision of the Great Wardrobe. In addition to itemising those jewels that were lost from the Queen’s person it also records material passed to ladies-in-waiting to produce accessories for the Queen, material and old garments given to tailors, and gifts of clothing.<sup>5</sup> According to Janet Arnold, who published this work, the accounts of lost jewels seem to relate to when Elizabeth was on her progresses and would appear to have been added to the day book from notes made on these journeys.<sup>6</sup>

While this source documents ‘buttons of golde with diamondes’, ‘Agletes of gold’ enamelled in all manner of colours, ‘buttons of gold enameled white and blue’, and diamond-set gold clasps, Treasure finds provide material evidence for the wearing of silver and silver-gilt ornaments, and archaeological data records evidence of base-metal examples.<sup>7</sup> Searches on the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) online database for controlled terms such as ‘dress fastener’, ‘dress hook’, or ‘button’ give an indication of just how commonplace such items were amongst ordinary citizens. In recent years there has been emphasis on ensuring that Treasure finds are also recorded systematically on the database.<sup>8</sup> Consequently, this makes it

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<sup>5</sup> Arnold, ed., *‘Lost from Her Majesty’s Back’*, p.9.

<sup>6</sup> Arnold, ed., *‘Lost from her Majesty’s Back’*, p.14.

<sup>7</sup> Arnold, ed., *‘Lost from her Majesty’s Back’*, entries 45, 52, 53, 64, 71, 126, 248; Geoff Egan, *Material Culture in London in an Age of Transition, Tudor and Stuart Period Finds c 1450- c 1700* (London: MoLAS, 2005), pp.39-52; Brian Read, *Metal Buttons, C. 900 BC - C. AD 1700* (Langport: Portcullis Publishing, 2005); Brian Read, *Hooked-Clasps & Eyes: A Classification & Catalogue of Sharp- or Blunt-Hooked Clasps & Miscellaneous Objects with Hooks, Eyes, Loops, Rings or Toggles* (Langport: Portcullis Publishing, 2008).

<sup>8</sup> In 2008 Finds Liaisons Officers were requested to create a PAS record for each new Treasure case reported to the British Museum. So from this point onwards, all Treasure finds should be accessible on the PAS site ([finds.org.uk/database](http://finds.org.uk/database)). There is currently an ongoing volunteer project to ensure that reports made pre-2008 are incorporated within the PAS database. Since the current number of finds is significantly higher than in earlier years, it is estimated that about 60% of all Treasure finds have PAS records. (Information taken from personal correspondence with Ian Richardson, Treasure Registrar, department of Portable Antiquities and Treasure, British Museum on 25 July 2012.

much easier to compare like objects regardless of their materiality. By not separating precious metal and non-precious metal objects provides a less anachronistic and false distinction between these ornaments.

A find reported as Treasure certainly had a practical function but the decorative features to its obverse indicate that it was worn in imitation of more costly examples (fig.4.5).



Figure 4.5: Silver-gilt clasp with hook-and-eye fitting with traces of green substance, found in Farndon, Nottinghamshire; England; probably sixteenth century. Newark and Sherwood Museum Service, NEKMS:2009.48 [Treasure ID: 2007 T613].

This silver-gilt fastening comprises a circular face with a cabled border, having an overall diameter of 8mm. The front is decorated with four roundels and within three of these are the remains of a green substance, which is possibly enamel or a paste composition, probably incorporated to allude to more precious materials. To the reverse is soldered a hook which has two loops for sewing to fabric at the opposite end to the tip. Attached to the hook is an eye-fitting which terminates in two loops. This part would have been affixed to the opposing fabric. It is a somewhat fortunate survival that has meant that both parts to this fitting have survived adjoined to one another.

Items such as dress fasteners and dress hooks have come to light in greater numbers and they are more widely known. Indeed, within the case displaying Tudor material at the British Museum one panel shows a number of dress hooks.<sup>9</sup> Buttons, however, constitute an object type that seems to have been largely neglected, even though London was the principal centre for the trade and manufacture of buttons until the eighteenth century.<sup>10</sup> While a search on the PAS database for post-medieval buttons yields over two thousand results, the

<sup>9</sup> The British Museum, Room 46, case 6: 2003,9-8.1; 2003,9-8.2; 2003,9-8.5; 2002,4-3.1; 2002,4-3.2; 2000,11-8.1; 2005,5-5.1.

<sup>10</sup> Hazel Forsyth, "Keeping up Appearances: A Few Finds from the Foreshore" paper given at the conference "Heavy Metal and Dirty Deeds: Buttons, Hooks & Other Dress Accessories", Museum of London, London, 10 March 2012. A recent publication explores the cultural and social significance of the button throughout history, looking also at its varied forms and functions – Nina Edwards, *On the Button: The Significance of an Ordinary Item* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2012).

department of Prehistory and Europe at the British Museum only has ten buttons within its collections from the period 1501 to 1649.<sup>11</sup> Seven of these are from the collections of the physician and collector Sir Hans Sloane (1660-1753), whose bequest became the founding collection of the British Museum. First and foremost these seven objects are noted for being an intaglio or cameo and indeed their registration numbers reflect this.<sup>12</sup> These objects have then been mounted as buttons. Thus the departmental holdings in effect include just three buttons, with one of these a recent acquisition through Treasure.<sup>13</sup> The Victoria and Albert Museum fares less well, with the exact same search criteria conducted on the museum's online collection facility producing only a single result from England: a tin-glazed earthenware button painted with a lion rampant, the letters 'IH', and the date 1651, probably made in London.<sup>14</sup>

The Museum of London has a vast collection of buttons, comprising the largest collection of medieval and early modern examples in the country. A search on the museum's online database for the term 'button' and then refined to include only post-medieval material brings 1602 records.<sup>15</sup> Many of these buttons were donated to the Museum of London by the mudlark Tony Pilson in 2009 along with a vast number of cufflinks.<sup>16</sup> Pilson is a member of the Society for Thames Mudlarks, a group of mudlarks who are licensed by the Port of London Authority to search the Thames foreshore for artefacts of potential historical significance.

The buttons within the collection vary in date from the late-fourteenth to the late-nineteenth centuries and a number of materials are represented: silver, pewter, and copper alloy, but to name just a few. Form, construction, and decorative features vary too. Forsyth speculates that these chance finds were presumably as a result of original accidental loss, as men and women travelled on ferries between the two banks of the Thames. Yet this is not sufficient to explain the numbers and variety of finds. She then suggests that they may have been collected from City households as rubbish, since the foreshore was used as a site for the

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<sup>11</sup> A search on the PAS database for 'button' and 'post-medieval' gives 2015 results (correct on 24 July 2012) of varying materials including copper alloy, lead alloy, silver, lead, pewter, tin or tin alloy, white metal, gold, glass, and base silver.

<sup>12</sup> British Museum, Prehistory and Europe SLAIntaglios.146, SLAIntaglios.148, SLAIntaglios.157, SLAIntaglios.172, SLBCameos.236, SLBCameos.242, SLBCameos.272.

<sup>13</sup> British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 2010,8036.1 [Treasure ID: 2009 T462]; 1934,1213.1; 1934,1213.3.

<sup>14</sup> Victoria and Albert Museum, C.111-1938, on display in the Ceramics Study Galleries, Britain, room 138, case C, shelf 4.

<sup>15</sup> This information is correct as of 24 July 2012.

<sup>16</sup> In total, Pilson donated on this occasion 2566 items to the Museum of London – Hazel Forsyth, "Keeping up Appearances".

dumping of waste.<sup>17</sup> Unlike the PAS data, which although recorded and photographed the objects are dispersed, this Museum of London material is contained together in one institution. This will allow for more scholarly research to be undertaken on this object type, which was undoubtedly an integral part of the dress and adornment of early modern citizens.<sup>18</sup>

As evidence of the widespread use of buttons within early modern society by men are those finds recovered from the wreck of the *Mary Rose*, a favourite warship of Henry VIII (r.1509-1547) that sank in the Solent in 1545 and raised eventually in 1982. The clothing and other ornaments discovered have allowed for an understanding of the types of goods worn by sailors, soldiers, and officers on board the ship, thus allowing for a less elite perspective on these types of objects. The online database of the artefacts recovered from the *Mary Rose* records 14,091 objects, with seventeen of these listed as buttons.<sup>19</sup> However, a publication that provides more comprehensive information on the items that document life on board the ship states that at least thirty buttons were found within the wreck.<sup>20</sup>

Many of these buttons comprised sets that can be associated with particular garment types. The majority of these buttons are made of wood with a silk covering. Four of these are spherical in form and are covered with red silk in a herringbone weave.<sup>21</sup> They were discovered in an area of the ship that possibly once housed the officers. They were a rather gruesome discovery, since they were attached to a disintegrated garment with threads of red silk that were in turn attached to a spine from a skeleton.<sup>22</sup> Contemporary sumptuary laws permitted the use of red silk only by a knight or the son of a lord, which could be taken as evidence of the high status of the original owner but it is important to consider that sumptuary legislation could be, and often was, flaunted.<sup>23</sup> In addition to the textile-covered wooden buttons, two examples are made of leather.<sup>24</sup> Seven buttons were found still affixed to three jerkins, while a single button was present on each of a shoe and an ankle boot. These finds

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<sup>17</sup> Hazel Forsyth and Geoff Egan, *Toys, Trifles & Trinkets: Base-Metal Miniatures from London 1200 to 1800* (London: Unicorn, 2005), pp.24-25; Forsyth, "Keeping up Appearances".

<sup>18</sup> The collection is documented with photographs, and dimensions and material type have been recorded. It now awaits further analysis.

<sup>19</sup> This result is achieved by conducting a search for button under 'simple name'. Information correct on 24 July 2012.

<sup>20</sup> Julie Gardiner and Michael J. Allen, eds., *Before the Mast: Life and Death Aboard the Mary Rose* (Portsmouth: Mary Rose Trust, 2005), p.96.

<sup>21</sup> Information taken from the online artefact database: 80A1837, 80A1928, 80A1929, 80A1937. Three of these have identical catalogue descriptions and are each 10mm in diameter. Only 80A1937 differs in that it is described as an oblate sphere and it has an overall diameter of 8mm, with a height of 5.61mm. No height is recorded for the other examples from this set.

<sup>22</sup> Gardiner and Allen, eds., *Before the Mast*, p.97.

<sup>23</sup> Gardiner and Allen, eds., *Before the Mast*, p.97.

<sup>24</sup> 82A4749 and 80A1383.

reveal how commonplace such items were amongst men within the sixteenth century.<sup>25</sup> While these pieces cannot be considered items of jewellery in the strictest sense, they nevertheless constituted personal adornment that served both a functional and ornamental use.

The quantity of archaeological material has allowed for type series of buttons to be made and the mudlark Brian Read has published his findings to assist with dating and identification. For the post-medieval period Read defines twenty-four typologies, ranging from ‘cast one-piece copper alloy buttons with integral drilled shanks’, mostly cast with relief decoration, to ‘die-stamped composite three-piece sheet copper alloy buttons with separate soldered drawn copper alloy wire shanks’, mostly with engraved decoration.<sup>26</sup> Excavations in London, undertaken as part of the London Bridge City redevelopment from 1986 to 1999, yielded a number of base metal buttons including copper alloy pieces with either solid cast heads or sheet heads and lead/tin examples with solid heads and integral loops for attachment.<sup>27</sup>

Archaeological finds of buttons made of base metal, as are reported through the Portable Antiquities Scheme, within the Museum of London’s collection, and elsewhere, seem to outweigh their precious metal counterparts despite pictorial evidence demonstrating that these objects were used by male courtiers. The richest source of material evidence for the period comes from a continental context: the *Girona*. Eighteen gold buttons were recovered from this wreck site. While they are now in various states of condition – most are misshapen or flattened and some have worn surface decoration – it has been possible to identify those that were once originally part of a set and thus worn together.<sup>28</sup> Their existence within this context provides sufficient evidence for elite male use in Spain. The quantities of base-metal buttons discovered in England and these gold examples would indicate that English male courtiers also possessed gold or silver buttons and the overall appearance may have been akin to that of the image of the courtier and favourite of Elizabeth I, Robert Dudley (1532-1588), earl of Leicester (fig.4.6).

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<sup>25</sup> 81A2592, leather jerkin with two buttons to the front; 81A2888, wool jerkin with one button to the back; 81A4693, jerkin with four buttons; 82A0877, leather ankle boots with a single button; 82A0755, leather shoe with one button.

<sup>26</sup> Read, *Metal Buttons*, pp.30-97. Read has published a similar survey of post-medieval hooked clasps and eyes: Read, *Hooked-Clasps & Eyes*, pp. 45-233.

<sup>27</sup> Egan, *Material Culture*, nos.178-219.

<sup>28</sup> See Appendix A.



Figure 4.6: Robert Dudley, first earl of Leicester; Steven van der Meulen; c.1560-1565. The Wallace Collection P534.

The front of Leicester's doublet is closed with fastenings or buttons with either a cluster of pearls or white enamelled knops placed within gold settings. Similar ornaments are used to hold together the opposing sides of his slashed sleeves in a decorative fashion. Following the death of Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales (b.1594) in 1612 accounts of his revenue were drawn up and included within these records is an inventory of his jewels. One section lists those jewels which remained at the time unpaid but that the prince had agreed upon. Amongst these items appear 'Fyfteen dissonne of gold buttons with a Dyamant in top of everie one of them for his highnes owne wearing'.<sup>29</sup> Amongst the drawings of jewels by Hans Holbein the Younger (1497/98-1543) from the 'Jewellery Book' are three small circular designs that were probably intended as buttons and further designs for five more ornate buttons (figs.4.7-4.8).<sup>30</sup> These drawings most likely represent jewels owned or commissioned

<sup>29</sup> William Bray, "An Account of the Revenue, the Expences, the Jewels, &c. of Prince Henry", *Archaeologica* XV, (1806): 13-26, p.20.

<sup>30</sup> Three designs for buttons: British Museum, Prints and Drawings SL,5308.149, SL,5308.132, SL,5308.134; and five designs for ornate buttons: British Museum, Prints and Drawings SL,5308.18, SL,5308.106, SL,5308.103, SL,5308.100, SL,5308.99, SL,5308.100.\*, SL,5308.99.\*. For more information on the history and



by Henry VIII and as such are an important visual source for documenting high-status objects that are no longer extant. Figure 4.8 could represent a design similar to the buttons owned by Henry Frederick.



Figure 4.7: Drawing for a button decorated with six fishes, from the 'Jewellery Book'; Hans Holbein the Younger; c.1532-1543. British Museum, Prints and Drawings SL,5308.132.



Figure 4.8: Drawing for an ornate button set with a table-cut stone within open foliated scrollwork, from the 'Jewellery Book'; Hans Holbein the Younger, c.1532-1543. British Museum, Prints and Drawings SL,5308.18.

According to Rosalind Ann Jones and Peter Stallybrass in the sixteenth century there was a notable increase in the use of buttons by men and not just amongst courtiers. They cite an excerpt from *The Old Law*, a play published in the mid-seventeenth century, in which a courtier derides the fact that older men were participating in fashion: 'They love a doublet thats three houres a buttoning'.<sup>31</sup> Visible on a portrait of the courtier Henry Carey (1526-

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contents of Sloane MS 5308, see John Rowlands, *Drawings by German Artists in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum. The Fifteenth Century, and the Sixteenth Century by Artists Born before 1530*, 2 vols. (London: Published for the Trustees of the British Museum by British Museum Press, 1993), vol.1, pp.152-76.

<sup>31</sup> Philip Massinger, Thomas Middleton and William Rowley, *The Excellent Comedy, Called the Old Law or a New Way to Please You* (London: printed for Edward Archer, 1656), p.16 also cited in Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.24.



1596), first Baron Hunsdon, which is dated to 1591 when Carey was 66 years of age, are at least twenty gold filigree buttons.<sup>32</sup>

Less grand than the jewels depicted by Holbein are those buttons that are reported as Treasure. They represent ownership and consumption at a level higher than the archaeological material found in the Museum of London collections or recorded on the Portable Antiquities Scheme database. However, the numbers of buttons within the Treasure reports do not approach the quantities of dress-hooks found within the same periods. They also constitute a relatively small proportion of overall post-medieval Treasure finds (Table 4.1).

<i>Treasure Annual Report</i>	Buttons	Cufflinks	Dress accessories	Total post-medieval finds declared to be Treasure <sup>33</sup>
1997/1998	2	1	0	23
1998/1999	0	0	17	78
2000	2	0	15	65
2001	2	0	5	49
2002	1	0	13	44
2003	5	0	14	100
2004	10	0	30	116
2005/2006	31	1	73	136
2007	0	1	6	195
2008	5	1	21	207
2009	12	15	32	202

Table 4.1: Breakdown of buttons, cufflinks, and dress accessories reported as Treasure from September 1997 to the end of 2009.

Table 4.1 includes a separate field for cufflinks, since it seems to be significant that in the most recent report of 2009 there are fifteen post-medieval finds reported. This is a substantial increase in previous years, when either a single instance was recorded or none at all. This could be as a result of the chance nature of many of these finds or, alternatively, this could be due to better recognition by the Finds Liaison Officers. It is clear from the same table that, overall, buttons are not as frequent finds as other types of dress accessories. Apart from the 2005/2006 period when they constituted almost 23% of all post-medieval finds, on the whole precious metal examples of this object type do not appear to be a particularly

<sup>32</sup> This portrait by an unknown Anglo-Dutch artist is from the collection at Berkeley Castle, Berkeley in Gloucestershire. It was exhibited at ‘Shakespeare: staging the world’, British Museum, 19 July to 25 November 2012 and is also in the accompanying publication – Jonathan Bate and Dora Thornton, *Shakespeare: Staging the World* (London: The British Museum Press, 2012), fig.32.

<sup>33</sup> These figures have been taken from the statistical information provided within the *Treasure Annual Reports* but discount any objects contained within the reports that were deemed to not be Treasure, either because they did not have a precious metal content of at least 10% or because they were not at least 300 years old.

common find. This is somewhat startling when contrasted with the archaeological material cited above.

The term dress accessory used within the table covers a broad remit and excludes any items that have been widely accepted as for female use, such as dress pins. It does not include cap-hooks, as these are a distinct category that is dealt with below. The exact composition of the groups of dress accessories for each year they are reported as Treasure is detailed in Table 4.2.

<i>Treasure Annual Report</i>	Dress accessories	Composition
1998/1999	17	Dress-hook (17)
2000	15	Dress-hook (14); aglet (1)
2001	5	Dress-hook (5)
2002	13	Dress-hook (10); tag dress fitting (1); hooked tag (1); hooked fastener (1)
2003	14	Dress-hook (12); dress fitting (2)
2004	30	Dress-hook (24); dress mount (3); dress fitting (2); eyelet (1)
2005/2006	73	Dress-hook (54); dress fitting (9); eyelet (6); dress accessory (3); mount (1)
2007	6	Hooked clasp (5); dress-hook loop (1)
2008	21	Dress-hook (11); dress clasp loop (1); dress fitting (5); mount (2); clasp (1); lace tag (1)
2009	32	Dress-hook (11); dress fitting (7); hooked tag (7); dress fastener (4); clasp (1); hook (1); eyelet (1)

Table 4.2: Dress accessories reported as Treasure from September 1998 to the end of 2009.

By far the most prolific designs that appear mostly as stamped decoration on the obverse of the Treasure buttons are those that have possible associations with the marriage of Charles II (r.1660-1685) to Catherine of Braganza (1638-1705) in 1662.<sup>34</sup> There are three distinct types. The first shows two hearts (sometimes conjoined) crowned (fig.4.9). The second is of joined hands above two hearts, which are surmounted by a crown (fig.4.10). The third type depicts a single flaming heart pierced by two crossed arrows (fig.4.11).

<sup>34</sup> Ivor Noël Hume, *A Guide to Artifacts of Colonial America* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1969), fig.22, p.89. This theory was recently called into question at a conference at which an image of a button with this motif was shown – Michael Lewis, "Geoff you missed this!: medieval and post-medieval highlights of the Portable Antiquities Scheme in 2011" paper given at "Heavy Metal and Dirty Deeds: Buttons, Hooks & Other Dress Accessories", Museum of London, London, 10 March 2012. Members of the audience believed that this was a design that may have a history dating further back than 1662. Nevertheless, the objects reported through Treasure do appear to date from the late-seventeenth century and even if the motif has a longer history it is not implausible for it to have been adopted to commemorate the royal marriage.



Figure 4.9: Silver button stamped on the obverse with two hearts surmounted by a crown, found in an unknown parish, Norfolk. Diameter: 16mm; England; late-seventeenth – eighteenth century. Treasure ID: 2006 T532i.



Figure 4.10: Silver button in three pieces stamped to the obverse with conjoined hands over two hearts and surmounted by a crown with shank to the reverse, found in Dunham on Trent, Nottinghamshire. Diameter: 15.8mm; weight: 1.04 grams; England; c.1675-c.1700. Treasure ID: 2008 T775.



Figure 4.11: Silver button stamped on the obverse with a flaming heart pierced by two arrows and shank and loop attachment to the reverse, found in Little Hampden, Buckinghamshire. Diameter: 13mm; England; late-seventeenth century. Treasure ID: 2008 T514.

<i>Treasure Annual Report</i>	Crowned hearts	Conjoined hands above paired hearts and crowned	Flaming heart pierced by arrows	Total buttons reported
2001	1	0	0	2
2003	1	0	0	5
2004	2	0	3	10
2005/2006	11	2	6	31
2008	1	1	1	5

Table 4.3: Buttons with motifs associated with the marriage of Charles II and Catherine of Braganza.

In addition to the figures represented in Table 4.3 two cufflinks bear the flaming heart pierced by two arrows and these were reported in the periods 2005/2006 (2006 T499) and 2008 (2008 T741), while one cufflink from the 2007 report has the two hearts crowned motif (2007 T77). Further, two copper alloy buttons, which were reported in 2004 and subsequently declared not Treasure, are ornamented with conjoined hearts crowned (2004 T212 and 2004 T213).<sup>35</sup>

These base-metal versions of a popular jewel provide strong evidence for like fashions being enjoyed across varied social levels. So while visual evidence documents elite male use of buttons made from precious metals and materials, surviving objects give proof of usage lower down the social scale. Simpler silver and silver-gilt examples of buttons may have been worn by middle-class men or urban citizens, while the base-metal pieces were reserved for men of minimal means. That these intrinsically low-value items could still be ornamented in a way similar to the precious metal buttons demonstrates that these were still important objects within a man's possession.

#### **4.3 Documentary evidence for dress embellishments**

Buttons were not the only type of ornament used on male clothing within the early modern period. Clasps and other fastenings did adorn the bodies of men and James Howell's seventeenth-century dictionary makes reference to a number of items that can be considered as embellishments to male dress. While he is not always detailed, the very fact that he records them under 'Apparel for men' is significant.<sup>36</sup> His entries reveal which types of objects were suitable for and worn by men in the seventeenth century. Many of these relate to clothing but jewellery is included and, significantly for this chapter, dress embellishments and associated verbs feature too: buttons, to button up, to unbutton, button loops, points, the tags of the points, to truss ones points, to untruss, embroidered with jewels, and a gold hat-band. This part of the chapter seeks to understand better what types of ornaments a man may have owned and what meaning they held for him. References to this type of material in wills and inventories will provide further evidence of this.

For example, the post-mortem household inventory of the parliamentary army officer Robert Devereux (1591-1646), third earl of Essex, begins with 'An Inventorie of the

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<sup>35</sup> The findspot for both copper alloy buttons is Cundall, North Yorkshire though they were discovered by two separate finders in September 2003 and April 2004.

<sup>36</sup> James Howell, *Lexicon Tetraglotton, an English-French-Italian-Spanish Dictionary: Whereunto Is Adjoined a Large Nomenclature of the Proper Terms (in All the Four) Belonging to Several Arts and Sciences, to Recreations, to Professions Both Liberal and Mechanik, &C. Divided into Fiftie Two Sections; with Another Volume of the Choicest Proverbs* (London: J.G. for Cornelius Bee, 1660), section xxxiii, unnumbered pages.

wearing apparell <w[i]th some other small things {....}>'.<sup>37</sup> This document sheds light on why these dress accessories have been somewhat neglected by jewellery historians, since this manuscript deals predominantly with clothing and textiles and there is no separate section listing jewels. However, there are some entries for jewelled possessions including 'A rich gold & siluer Belt Embroydred' and 'one gold & siluer hatbande'.<sup>38</sup> Of particular interest to the theme of this chapter is the presence of 'A <french> scarlet Cloke lined w[i]th ba{...} w[i]th siluier & gold buttons Clopes'.<sup>39</sup>

Likewise in the post-mortem inventory of Henry Howard (1540-1614), earl of Northampton, a reference to small-scale dress accessories is to be found in amongst the clothing: 'Item a white sattin dublett unlaced cutt and raced with flowers and silver buttons'.<sup>40</sup> Further, it is an inventory of the plate had by the courtier Sir Henry Sidney (1529-1586) when in Ireland in September 1575 and in the possession of George Arglas that reveals that he had 'Two dozen points with silver tags'.<sup>41</sup>

The inventory of William Herbert (1507-1570), first earl of Pembroke, dated to 1561 includes a section listing his 'Buttons and aglettes beinge on no garmentes'.<sup>42</sup> This is particularly interesting for it does suggest that these jewels were not associated with specific garments and were considered as movable objects in their own right – not ornamentation to a specific dress. However, there are numerous records of precious metal buttons within the inventory that do appear within the context of clothing. For example, the first jerkin that is listed is described as being of 'white perfumed leather laide on thicke with a lace of black silke, golde and silver, lyned with blacke taffata with xxv knott buttons of golde, white and black enameled'.<sup>43</sup> Another black satin jerkin is 'sett with ii dosen ii golde buttons snaile fashion, white enameled'.<sup>44</sup> These buttons in the form of a snail also feature on a black satin doublet.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>37</sup> "Household Inventory of Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex (1596-1646)", 1646, British Library, Additional MS 46189, ff.150-65, f.150.

<sup>38</sup> "Household Inventory of Robert Devereux", ff.150-150v.

<sup>39</sup> "Household Inventory of Robert Devereux", f.151. 'Closes' probably refers to 'clasps' and these may have been associated with this particular cloak.

<sup>40</sup> Evelyn Philip Shirley, "An Inventory of the Effects of Henry Howard, K.G., Earl of Northampton, Taken on His Death in 1614, Together with a Transcript of His Will", *Archaeologica* 42, no. II (1869): 347-78, p.367.

<sup>41</sup> Charles Lethbridge Kingsford, ed., *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord De L'Isle & Dudley Preserved at Penshurst Place*, 6 vols. (London: HMSO, 1925), vol.1, p.276.

<sup>42</sup> "Inventory of Gold and Silver Plate, Jewells and Apparrell Etc. Of William, Earl of Pembroke", 12 December 1561, National Art Library, ff.73r-73v. This particular section comes under the inventory that lists the 'apparell, furies and jewelless as be in the chardge of Thomas Gregory' taken on 17 August 1561, ff.38r-81v.

<sup>43</sup> "Inventory of William, Earl of Pembroke", f.48r.

<sup>44</sup> "Inventory of William, Earl of Pembroke", f.48r.

<sup>45</sup> "Inventory of William, Earl of Pembroke", f.51r.

In fact, Pembroke was in possession of a vast array of buttons which were presumably circulated between his clothing. The buttons are listed by type and this indicates that they were worn in sets, with Herbert owning at least twelve.

Vlviii buttons enameled blewe and redde w[i]th iii perles on every button.

Item xxxvi buttons of golde black enameled

Item vi dosen buttons, white and blewe enameled fasshioned like the sonne.

Item iii dosen and x buttons enameled white and black w[i]th iiii corners.

Item xlii buttons w[i]th iii perles on every button beinge black enameled.

Item xxii paire of aglettes black enameled

Item lxxviii buttons of golde

Item xxii buttons lesser like vnto the same.

Item iii dosen iiii buttons enameled white called Pannses made by Denham.

Item v buttons white and black enameled

Item iiii buttons made like snailles enameled white

Buttons

Item ii dosen viii greate buttons bosselike w[i]th a faire perle on the toppe of every button enameled white black and blewe.<sup>46</sup>

The fact that the majority of Pembroke's jerkins and doublets had buttons attached to them suggests that these buttons that are not associated with clothing must have been particularly special items. They were presumably affixed to his dress when the occasion demanded it. An alternative possibility is that these buttons were spares, but this does not seem a sufficient explanation for the large numbers contained within most of the sets.<sup>47</sup>

While Pembroke's inventory offers detailed written descriptions of the earl's buttons, a continental inventory offers a glimpse of the actual form and appearance of these small jewels. Dated to 16 December 1577, the inventory records the jewels of Vincenzo Gonzaga (1562-1612), later duke of Mantua, in the keeping of the engraver Giorgio Ghisi (1520-1582).<sup>48</sup> Alongside entries such as '24 gold buttons with a ruby in each button', '24 gold buttons with four small rubies on each button', and '53 gold buttons enamelled in black and white' appear sketches of the jewels in question.<sup>49</sup> A source of this type is invaluable for it

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<sup>46</sup> "Inventory of William, Earl of Pembroke", ff.73r-73v.

<sup>47</sup> An extant portrait of Pembroke attributed to the artist Hans Ewouts (fl.1540-1574) is in the Collection of the Earl of Pembroke at Wilton House, Wiltshire. Gold ornaments adorn Pembroke's cloak, while buttons fasten its sleeves and are also used to fasten the front of his doublet.

<sup>48</sup> "Inventario dei gioielli di Vincenzo Gonzaga", 16 December 1577, Archivio di Stato di Mantova, AG, b.400, ff.320r-v illustrated in Paola Venturelli, *Le Collezioni Gonzaga: Cammei, Cristalli, Pietre Dure, Oreficerie, Cassettine, Stipetti: Intorno All'elenco Dei Beni Del 1626-1627 Da Guglielmo a Vincenzo II Gonzaga* (Cinisello Balsamo (Milan): Silvana, 2005), figs.37-38.

<sup>49</sup> 'Botoni d'oro no. 24 co[n] vno Rubino p[er] ciascheduno botone', 'Botoni d'oro no. uintiquatro co[n] quatro rubinetti p[er] botone', 'Botoni d'oro no. 53 smaltati de nero et bianco' – Venturelli, *Le Collezioni Gonzaga*, figs.37-38.

allows us to visualise the types of objects documented elsewhere. It also assists with identifying potential owners for surviving objects. For the gold, enamelled buttons listed in the Gonzaga inventory take on a form that is strikingly similar to a single button recovered from the *Girona* shipwreck (BGR 33).<sup>50</sup> This in turn suggests strongly that the owner of the *Girona* button was a member of the nobility.

While inventories provide documentary evidence of actual ownership of these smaller jewels, showing that they were deemed worthy enough of recording, wills provide more effective evidence of the range of values that dress accessories had for their owners. The will of Robert Steyll, chaplain of St Mary Woolchurch in London, dated to 1 August 1510 gives insight into the limited possessions of a religious figure.<sup>51</sup> There are a number of monetary bequests, ranging from four pence left to Ralph Bransby to *3l. 6s. 8d.* which is given to James Fynard, a citizen and goldsmith of London and one of Steyll's executors. Additionally Fynard receives Steyll's 'best cap'. These are in addition to a further twenty shillings given to Fynard in his capacity as executor. The second executor, Simon Fowlar, also receives twenty shillings for his role but he too is remembered in the will. He receives from Steyll his 'best cloak and a tippet and two clasps of silver and a breviary'. It is likely that these two clasps were worn exclusively with this best cloak and tippet.

Excepting the monetary gifts the majority of bequests are of clothing, save also for Steyll's bed, its furnishings, and chamber hangings, which he leaves to a kinsman by the name of Thomas. It is clear then that Steyll is leaving to his family and friends all that was dear to him. The two silver clasps that Fowlar receives are amongst the few items listed that are not clothing. A fellow chaplain, John Upton, is fortunate to receive the only other jewel – 'a silver clasp with a crucifix'. The only other object made of precious metal is a silver spoon and this is left to Richard Atkynson, along with a primer of parchment. That Steyll saw fit to bequeath the three silver clasps he owned, rather than having them sold to pay for the provisions in his will, suggests that they were personal to him and that he wished for their reuse by individuals close to him.

In contrast, the parson of Nevendon in Essex, Thomas Awsten, was more concerned over his mother's wellbeing and the vast majority of his estate was left to his brother Rychard Awstyn to look after her.<sup>52</sup> However, Thomas does make two named bequests in his will of

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<sup>50</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>51</sup> Ida Darlington, ed., *London Consistory Court Wills 1492-1547*, (London: London Record Society, 1967), no.12, pp.8-9.

<sup>52</sup> Darlington, ed., *London Consistory Court Wills*, no.65, p.38.

10 July 1518. These are both of a 'tache of sylver and gilt'.<sup>53</sup> The first is left to provide for his parish church 'for to make a howke for the pyx over the high alter ther'. The second is give to Thomas Tendryng, along with a girdle of black silk. Again, while one of these taches is only deemed worthy for its monetary worth, Awsten still sees fit to give one to his acquaintances rather than take advantage of its fiscal value for his mother's care.

Thomas Bellamy, in his will dated to 11 August 1518, leaves his witness Robert Hill his best gown, a gelded colt, and a tippet of sarsenet 'with my tache of silver'.<sup>54</sup> Bellamy's occupation is not stated but he bequeaths a number of animals and quantities of hay, which suggests that he was a farmer. The remainder of his named bequests include clothing, bedding, and vessels of pewter and these goods suggest that his means were relatively limited. So, along with a single silver spoon bequeathed to his brother Roger Belamy the silver tache constituted his only precious metal possessions and indeed his only item of jewellery.<sup>55</sup>

The will of the widow Anie Diryckson, dated to 17 September 1541, provides evidence of goods that were presumably the possession of her late husband in the form of a bequest to a certain Garret Kirikell of 'his unculles beste gowne, beste jacket of worsted, blacke cloke and 40s.'. <sup>56</sup> So it is unclear whether the bequest of a 'peare of sylver hokes' to her cousin Neskyn were items of her personal use or originally belonged to her husband.

#### 4.4 Cap-hooks and hat ornaments

In the day book from the Wardrobe of the Robes an entry records a gift from Elizabeth I on 5 May 1574 to Thomas Sidney (1569-1595), the third son of Sir Henry Sidney, of 'One Cappe of blak taphata having a bande of goldesmythes worke conteyning xxv Hartes and Roses enameled and with thre litle pearles pendaunte to every harte'.<sup>57</sup> A hat-band was one type of jewel that could decorate male headgear within this period. Thomas Sidney may have also chosen to adorn his hat with separate jewels of enamelled hearts and roses. Affixed individually these would have then been categorised as cap-hooks.

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<sup>53</sup> The term 'tache' is listed in the Oxford English Dictionary as 'A contrivance for fastening two parts together; a fibula, a clasp, a buckle, a hook and eye, or the like; a hook for hanging anything on. *Obs.* or *arch.*'. "tache | tach, n.2", OED Online, June 2012, Oxford University Press. 30 July 2012 <<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/196873?rskey=iiHtV9&result=2&isAdvanced=false>>.

<sup>54</sup> Darlington, ed., *London Consistory Court Wills*, no 68, p.40.

<sup>55</sup> Elyn Belamy is in receipt of a great candlestick and saucer but there is no mention of what material these are made.

<sup>56</sup> Darlington, ed., *London Consistory Court Wills*, no.144, p.80.

<sup>57</sup> Arnold, *Lost from her Majesty's Back*, entry 171.



The British Museum has acquired five objects reported as Treasure that have been classified today as just such a ‘cap-hook’. A further two items may have been worn in the cap but their attribution has not been made definitive: one has been named a ‘badge’, while the second has been only tentatively assigned the term ‘cap-hook’<sup>58</sup>. Each of these is either emblematic or purely decorative. They are all made of silver and some are gilded entirely or partially gilded. Until the discovery of a number of these items recorded through Treasure, they had not been classed as a distinct group. So, although gold examples are frequently depicted adorning the hats of English courtiers, such as Sir Nicholas Poyntz (1510-1557), sheriff of Gloucestershire (fig.4.12) or members of the landed gentry like Simon George of Cornwall (fig.4.13), their ubiquitous nature amongst lower social groups was not truly appreciated until fairly recently.



Figure 4.12: Sir Nicholas Poyntz; after Hans Holbein the Younger; late-sixteenth century. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 5583.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>58</sup> British Museum, *Prehistory and Europe* 2001, 7-1.1 and 2009, 8037.1.

<sup>59</sup> The original Holbein drawing on which this portrait is based is in the Royal Collection (RCIN 912234) and clearly shows that at this early stage Holbein was considering the three larger jewels for the hat and the gold hat band.



Figure 4.13: Simon George of Cornwall; Hans Holbein the Younger; c.1535/40. Städel Museum, Frankfurt, inv. no. 1065.

In their 2002 article, Gaimster *et al.* offer a crucial first study of these cap-hooks, along with a number of dress hooks that were reported through the Treasure Act between 1998 and 2000.<sup>60</sup> Sampling fifteen objects from these two categories they ‘assess the role of these accessories in vernacular dress of sixteenth-century England’.<sup>61</sup> To support the material evidence the authors employ a varied range of sources, from the visual to the archival, the latter in the form of wills and probate inventories. This section has similar aims and, in addition, it attempts to focus on the importance of these items to their primarily male owners. Since the cap-hooks are borne from the same tradition as other hat ornaments that were usually used by men (see the next chapter), we are probably looking at a distinctly male aesthetic.

In 2001, the British Museum acquired two cap-hooks and a third object that has been termed neutrally as a ‘badge’.<sup>62</sup> A composite, cast parcel-gilt ornament in the form of a six-spoked Catherine-wheel, which is set with a multi-petalled flower head emanating from a central hemispherical boss, has soldered to its reverse a recurving hook (fig.4.14). It has a maximum diameter of 19.2mm and weighs 3.58 grams.

<sup>60</sup> David Gaimster, Maria Hayward, David Mitchell, and Karen Parker, "Tudor Silver-Gilt Dress-Hooks: A New Class of Treasure Find in England", *The Antiquaries Journal*, 82, (2002): 157-96.

<sup>61</sup> Gaimster *et al.*, "Tudor Silver-Gilt Dress-Hooks", p.157.

<sup>62</sup> These three objects have all been published in Gaimster *et al.*, "Tudor Silver-Gilt Dress-Hooks", pp.169-73 and the physical descriptions included here of these pieces have been adapted from this article.



Figure 4.14: Composite, cast parcel gilt cap-hook or hat ornament in the form of a Catherine-wheel, found in Nettlestead, Suffolk; England; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 2001,7-3.1 [Treasure ID: 1999 T102].

Clearly, this object was intended to be decorative in nature and the effect of the contrasting colours, achieved through the partial gilding to the rim and the central boss, adds to its aesthetic qualities. The prominent central boss may have been an attempt to imitate more costly materials, such as a pearl. Based on pictorial evidence of courtly men with their gold hat ornaments, it is unlikely that an object of this type was worn in isolation: it is much more probable that this cap-hook was one of a set. A posthumous painting in the Royal Collection (RCIN 403444) of Arthur Tudor (1486-1502), Prince of Wales, shows how two small, four-petalled cap-hooks are used to hold the folds of the brim of the Prince's cap in place.<sup>63</sup>

The second cap-hook to be acquired in the same year by the Museum is another composite ornament (fig.4.15). It is hollow-cast and takes the form of a domed cushion, which has a circular back-plate with a serrated edge. The domed part of this object is pierced and has applied filigree and granular decoration to its surface. This piece is gilded entirely but to some parts of the filigree ornament it is worn. The central part of it is set with a glass, oval-shaped cameo, probably depicting the deity Jupiter Ammon. To the reverse is soldered a recurving pin that is now broken.

<sup>63</sup> Gaimster *et al.*, "Tudor Silver-Gilt Dress-Hooks", p.173, fig.19.



Figure 4.15: Composite cap-hook with filigree and granular ornament, set centrally with a cameo of the head of Jupiter Ammon, found in Kingerby, Lincolnshire; England; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 2001,3-10.1 [Treasure ID: 1999 T174].

The cameo is thought to be post-classical in date.<sup>64</sup> Nevertheless, the presence of a profile bust of a Roman god suggests that the owner of this piece may have wished to appear erudite to his fellow citizens. The cap-hook is of a similar scale to the previous example: it weighs 4 grams and is 17.8mm in diameter.

The British Museum made a third acquisition in 2001 from those Treasure finds recorded in 1999 that could be classified as hat ornaments. Although this particular example has been accessioned on the Museum's database as a badge, it is included in the Gaimster *et al.* article under the heading of 'Cap-hooks' (fig.4.16).<sup>65</sup>



Figure 4.16: Cast, silver-gilt circular badge, probably worn in the cap, engraved with a crowned 'I' flanked by two Tudor roses, found in Raydon, Suffolk; England; early-sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 2001, 7-1.1 [Treasure ID: 1999 T152].

This object is in the form of a roundel which is recessed into a deep frame of two concentric circles. It is engraved with a crowned 'I' flanked by two Tudor roses on a hatched ground. To the reverse is soldered the remains of a flat section of a recurving pin. This is a somewhat more substantial piece than the above examples: it has an overall diameter of

<sup>64</sup> Gaimster *et al.*, "Tudor Silver-Gilt Dress-Hooks", p.173.

<sup>65</sup> Gaimster *et al.*, "Tudor Silver-Gilt Dress-Hooks", pp.170-71, fig.13.



25mm and, at 11.09 grams, it weighs significantly more. The engraved design on the obverse of this object suggests that this was probably worn as a badge of allegiance or to show livery associations.

A later find from the same findspot of Raydon in Suffolk, also acquired by the British Museum, was clearly meant to be an overt declaration of a man's pious nature (fig.4.17).



Figure 4.17: Cast silver cap-hook with a Crucifixion scene, found in Raydon, Suffolk; England; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 2005,1-5.1 [Treasure ID: 2003 T372].

Weighing only 2 grams and with dimensions of 13.31mm by 10mm, this small silver cap-hook has an overall rectangular form which is comprised of three figures and probably depicts the Crucifixion of Christ. The central figure is Christ, who is flanked by two individuals in profile. A hook with a pointed tip is soldered horizontally to the reverse and it has two bends. An immediate obvious comparison to make is with those medieval pilgrim badges that took on the form of the subject represented (see the next chapter). This is so far a unique example of a cap-hook with religious imagery.

Another purely decorative ornament has been cast in the form of a stylised flower with four petals. These are interspersed with smaller petals. This piece is made of silver and has been gilded, though much of the gilding is now worn. In the centre of this cap-hook is a pyramidal form, which may be an attempt to mimic the facets of a point-cut diamond or another precious or semi-precious gemstone. An s-shaped pin with a sharp tip has been soldered to the reverse (fig.4.18). It is likely that it was originally one of a set placed around the circumference of a cap. This type of ornamental cap-hook is very similar in style to the gold examples worn by Nicholas Poyntz in the Holbein portrait (fig.4.12).



Figure 4.18: Cast, silver-gilt cap-hook in the form of a stylised flower, found in Arreton, Isle of Wight; England; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 2006,3-1.1 [Treasure ID: 2004 T359].

Next in the sequence of Treasure cap-hooks acquired by the British Museum is a circular, silver-gilt example that has been cast entirely in one piece (fig.4.19). Eight knops project from the edges and the front is embellished with a Tudor rose.



Figure 4.19: Cast, silver-gilt ornament for dress, probably a cap-hook, decorated with a Tudor rose, found in North Yorkshire; England; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 2009,8037.1 [Treasure ID: 2007 T182].

To the reverse is evidence of a hook that has been applied through soldering. It is very likely that this piece was worn in a man's cap, possibly to show allegiance to the Tudor dynasty. It is unclear why this object has not been classed definitively as a hat ornament; its scale and form certainly allude to its use on headgear and the emblematic associations suggest that it was a male-gendered item of jewellery.

Finally, the most recent cap-hook to be accessioned by the British Museum is made of silver, with the obverse gilded (fig.4.20). It is 12.5mm in diameter and weighs 2.5 grams.



Figure 4.20: Cast silver-gilt cap-hook in the form of a nine-petalled flower, found in Beeston with Bittering, Norfolk; England; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 2010,8019.1 [Treasure ID: 2009 T99].

It takes on the form of a flower with nine petals in two layers and the inner layer is engraved. It has a centrally-placed boss. To the reverse a plain silver hook has been soldered and this has been bent back in an s-shape. This purely decorative piece is yet another example of the types of ornament that were generally found adorning the caps of men in the sixteenth century.

Small-scale dress accessories made of precious and base metal constituted items of jewellery within the early modern period. While these items are usually considered in the context of dress history, it is imperative that they are also rewritten into the story of jewellery bringing the two back together. They adorned male and female dress, providing both ornamental and functional use but this chapter has focused on the male body. The often-gilded silver jewels are so similar in style and form to the gold and gem-set jewels represented pictorially in the paintings of elite Tudor men that it is clear this aesthetic was not the exclusive reserve of courtiers and noblemen. While a number of buttons remained only functional, being devoid of ornament, a large number do have engraved or stamped decoration. This shows that function was not the only concern when purchasing such objects. Evidence of these dress accessories within inventories and wills highlights their relative importance. The next chapter continues by looking at jewels of an emblematic nature that were worn on the caps of men within the early modern period.

## Chapter 5

### Emblematic hat ornaments: a distinctly male jewel

Item a Cappe of blacke vellat with a brouche of golde enameled sett with a Rock Rubie and a table diamounte with three men and a woman with a Scripture over the Rubie the Cappe garnished with lxxij Buttons of golde in every Button three peerles one <perle> lacking.<sup>1</sup>

The ‘brouche of golde’ listed in the 1547 inventory of Henry VIII (r.1509-1547) is a hat ornament that falls into the same category as the much simpler hat badges that were described in Chapter 4. Although it does not survive, it is clearly a much more elaborate and expensive version. As such it has as much, if not more, in common with contemporary European fashions. The noted sixteenth-century Florentine goldsmith and sculptor Benvenuto Cellini (1500-1575) commented on the fashion for the placing of ornaments in the hat in both his autobiography and his treatise on goldsmithing, describing in the latter how they were almost sculptural in the rendering of the figures.<sup>2</sup>

At this time you would use some small medals of gold, upon which each man or gentleman liked to have engraved his whim or device; and they would wear these on their hats.<sup>3</sup>

And amongst the other beautiful works in my time it was customary to make certain small medals of the finest gold, to place in the hat or cap; and on these medals you would have made figures of low relief, and of half relief, and completely in the round, such a thing made a very beautiful sight.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> David Starkey, ed., *The Inventory of King Henry VIII. Society of Antiquaries MS 129 and British Library MS Harley 1419. Volume I: The Transcript* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers for Society of Antiquaries London, 1998), no.3263.

<sup>2</sup> Cellini is one of a few Florentine goldsmiths mentioned by the author Giorgio Vasari who was brought to the court of Alessandro de' Medici (1510-1537) – Giorgio Vasari, *Le Vite De' Più Eccellenti Architetti, Pittori, et Scultori Italiani, Da Cimabue Insino a' Tempi Nostri*, 2 vols., edited by Luciano Bellosi and Aldo Rossi with introduction by Giovanni Previtali. From the edition printed by Lorenzo Torrentino, Florence, 1550 (Turin: Einaudi, 1991) vol. 2, p.735, note 22.

<sup>3</sup> ‘Se usava in questo tempo alcune medagliette d'oro, che ogni signore e gentiluomo li piaceva fare scolpire in esse un suo capriccio o impresa; e le portavano nella berretta’ – Benvenuto Cellini, *La Vita*, edited by Guido Davico Bonino (Turin: Nuova Universale Einaudi, 1973), book 1, XXXI; Benvenuto Cellini and Francesco Maria Tassi, *Vita Di Benvenuto Cellini: Orefice E Scultore Fiorentino*, 2 vols., (Leipzig: Leopold Voss, 1833), vol. 1, p.55. See also Benvenuto Cellini, *The Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini*, translated by George Bull (London: Penguin Books, 1998), p.52.

<sup>4</sup> ‘Et in fra l'altre belle opere in nel tempo mio si usava di fare certe medagliette di oro sottilissime, per portare nelle berrette e ne' cappelli; et in queste medaglie si facevano drento figure di basso rilievo, e di mezzo rilievo, e tutte tonde, la qual cosa faceva un vedere bellissimo’ – Benvenuto Cellini, *I Trattati Dell'Oreficeria E Della Scultura Di Benvenuto Cellini*, edited by Carlo Milanese (Florence: Felice le Monnier, 1857), pp.71-72.



Images of Tudor men with jewelled ornaments in their caps provide further evidence of this trend. The type of hats and caps worn by men in this period were suited for the placing of such jewels. Since women were more accustomed to wearing hoods the top of their bodies were ornamented in different ways, with pearls very often lining the edges.<sup>5</sup>



Figure 5.1: Detail of hat ornaments from portrait of Sir Christopher Hatton; unknown; probably seventeenth century (1589). National Portrait Gallery, NPG 2162.



Figure 5.2: Detail of hat ornaments from portrait of Henry VIII; unknown; c.1520. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 4690.

Despite their frequent depictions in contemporary images the fashion for the placing of these larger, brooch-like ornaments in the hat had a relatively brief history. When Cellini remarked on their popularity he would have been unaware that by the closing years of the sixteenth century and into the seventeenth century the emblematic hat ornament would have fallen out of favour with male rulers, courtiers, and other male members of society throughout Europe. This section investigates the history, use, and decline of the hat ornament to establish why it was a suitable item of male jewellery, how it was indicative of a strong masculine identity, and how this object type supports the hypothesis that in the early modern period jewels had a worth far greater than could be measured in monetary terms.

The adoption of this fashion has been attributed to the entry of the French king Charles VIII (1470-1498) and his men into Naples on 22 February 1495. This claim has been propagated by the only monograph to-date on the subject of hat badges written by the late

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<sup>5</sup> See for example Mary Nevill (1524-c.1576), Lady Dacre in the double portrait by Hans Ewouts (fl.1540-1574), National Portrait Gallery NPG 6855.

Yvonne Hackenbroch, in which a watercolour pen-and-ink drawing of this event has been published (fig.5.3).<sup>6</sup>



Figure 5.3: Entry of Charles VIII and his army into Naples, February 1495 from *Cronaca della Napoli aragonese*. Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, MS M.801, f.109.

The manuscript in which this drawing appears is actually a collection of a number of late medieval works, including three chronicles that were written and illustrated in Naples not long after 1498. The compilations are: *Fasciculus temporum*, which is a summary of world history put together by the German monk Werner Rolevinck; *Cronaca di Partenope*, an anonymous history of Naples from the early medieval period to the start of the fifteenth century; *Bagni di Pozzuoli*, which provides an account of the medicinal baths at Pozzuoli; and an untitled history of Naples dating from 1423 to 1498, referred to as *Cronaca della Napoli aragonese* and authored by an individual with the name of Ferraiolo.<sup>7</sup>

The entire manuscript contains about one hundred and fifty pen-and-wash drawings and about one hundred and twenty of these are within the *Cronaca della Napoli aragonese*. The drawing of Charles VIII's entry appears in this last section of the manuscript, which covers folios 84r to 150r. The drawings within this chronicle, which is the only known copy

<sup>6</sup> Yvonne Hackenbroch, *Enseignes: Renaissance Hat Jewels* (Florence: Studio per edizioni scelte, 1996), fig.2. Since this is the only publication to have dealt with the subject of hat ornaments as a distinct object type, it has become established as an authoritative voice. Its limitations are addressed later in this chapter in an attempt to provide a fuller understanding of the wearing of ornaments in the hat by men within the sixteenth century.

<sup>7</sup> Information taken from the Pierpont Morgan Library online catalogue record for MS M.801: <http://corsair.themorgan.org/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?BBID=146991>, accessed 2 April 2012.

in existence, provide exceptional detail of contemporary people and events.<sup>8</sup> The image of Charles VIII and his men does not seem to show an oppressive invading force and in fact a description provided by the historian Francesco Guicciardini (1483-1540) of this event seems to suggest that Charles was welcomed.<sup>9</sup>

Adopting a new approach to this period of the Italian Wars, Christine Shaw has identified marked differences relating to Charles's entries into the various Italian states. As he entered Florence and the Papal states, Charles wore 'bejewelled armour'. The image he presented was one of a conqueror and he held his lance ready for battle. In contrast to this, Charles arrived in Naples with a smaller retinue, rode a mule, held a hawk (not a lance), and was clothed in dress more appropriate for the hunt.<sup>10</sup> In part, this may have been due to the fact that Alfonso II of Naples (1448-1495) had abdicated prior to the arrival of Charles.

The manuscript drawing seems to offer an accurate portrayal of this entry (or at least an accurate reflection of the description of the entry), while other drawings within the chronicle seem to document Neapolitan dress and culture accurately. In fact it has been noted in the supplementary information to the catalogue entry that the abstract designs within the margins of the work are very similar in style to contemporary ornament on works of gold and silver. The author of this text even states that 'They [the designs] are rendered much more authoritatively and convincingly than the human figures'.<sup>11</sup> Thus this work has been seen as a useful and reliable source. In particular, Hackenbroch has used the drawing of Charles's entry as visual evidence for the wearing of ornaments in the hat. Charles is seen with a gold circular badge affixed to the brim of his headgear, while the men accompanying him on horseback can be seen with badges on their caps.

Shaw has acknowledged that current scholarship is in favour of the fact that the late fifteenth-century invasion 'marked a new era in Italian and European history' but she is of the opinion that Charles did not set out with this intention.<sup>12</sup> However, one element that perhaps no-one could have anticipated was the effect that Charles would have on material cultural within the Italian peninsula and beyond. According to Hackenbroch, the French fashions

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<sup>8</sup> For the text of this chronicle and some colour and black and white plates see Ferraiolo, *Una Cronaca Napoletana Figurata Del Quattrocento*, edited by Riccardo Filangieri (Naples: L'Arte Tipografica, 1956). In particular, see no.75, pp.128-29 and plate 40 for the entry of Charles VIII into Naples.

<sup>9</sup> Francesco Guicciardini, *The History of Italy*, translated by Austin Parke Goddard, 3rd ed., 10 vols. (London: printed for Z. Stuart, 1763), vol. 1, p.233-34.

<sup>10</sup> Christine Shaw, "Shock and Awe: Charles VIII and the Italians, 1494-95", paper given at Early Modern Italy seminar, Institute of Historical Research, London, 11 February 2010.

<sup>11</sup> <http://corsair.morganlibrary.org/msdescr/BBM0801a.pdf>, p.2, Pierpont Morgan Library, Manuscript Descriptions MS M.801 accessed 2 April 2012.

<sup>12</sup> Shaw, "Shock and Awe", 11 February 2010.

were admired.<sup>13</sup> Shaw has highlighted the ‘shock and awe’ that came from the sheer brutality of the French invasion. Yet this incursion had another effect, one not considered by Shaw. It had an impact on the way that men would dress in the future. In particular, the 1495 invasion was influential and pivotal for introducing a new form of jewellery for men: the hat ornament. The sixteenth-century Italian author Paolo Giovio (1483-1552) commented on the origins of this trend for adorning the hat with jewels, providing further evidence that the spread of this object type originated with the French and their invasion of Italy.

But in our times, after the arrival of King Charles VIII and Louis XII into Italy, everyone who was accustomed to following the military, in imitation of the French captains, looked to adorn himself with fine and ostentatious emblems.<sup>14</sup>

As this indicates, the badge of gold worn by Charles VIII was not intended to be a jewel; rather it was a military badge and its purpose was to allow the king to clearly distinguish himself from his army. Giovio’s words support the fact that this ‘form of masculine adornment not seen before in Italy’ was so admired that these military badges were adapted to reflect humanist thought and Renaissance ideas of self-fashioning.<sup>15</sup> Badges used within a military context prevailed through the sixteenth century and this can be attested to by a surviving hat ornament worn by a Dutch sailor during the Spanish siege of Leiden, Netherlands in 1573/74.<sup>16</sup> This silver badge is in the form of a crescent moon engraved with facial features and the curved edge is bordered with an inscription to the obverse and reverse: ‘LIVER TURCX \* DAN PAVS’ (Rather Turk than Papist); and ‘EN DESPIY.DELAMES’ (In spite of the Mass). The purpose of an object such as this was to declare Dutch religious sentiment in a conspicuous manner.

Another group of objects has parallels to the hat ornament and this Renaissance jewel may find its origins in the medieval pilgrim badge (fig.5.4).

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<sup>13</sup> Hackenbroch, *Enseignes*, p.90.

<sup>14</sup> ‘Ma à questi nostri te[m]pi dopò la venuta del Rè Carlo Ottauo e di Lodouico XII in Italia, ogn’vn, che seguitaua la militia, imitando i Capitani Francesi, cercò di adornarsi di belle e pompose Imprese’ – Paolo Giovio, *Dell’Imprese Militari Et Amoroze Di Monsignor Giovio Vescouo Di Nocera; Con Un Ragionamento Di Messer Lodouico Domenichi, Nel Medesimo Soggetto* (Lyon: Guglielmo Roviglio, 1559), A4v.

<sup>15</sup> Hackenbroch, *Enseignes*, p.90.

<sup>16</sup> Nederlands Scheepvaart Museum, Amsterdam discussed and illustrated in M.J. Rodriguez-Salgado, *Armada, 1588-1988* (London: Penguin Books in association with the National Maritime Museum, 1988), cat. 6.9 and fig.116.



Figure 5.4: Lead-alloy medieval pilgrim badge from the shrine of St Thomas à Becket; England; mid-fifteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 2001,7-2.7.

Pilgrim badges served as conspicuous symbols of the holy shrines visited by a pilgrim. This particular example was found in Billingsgate, London but came originally from the shrine of St Thomas à Becket (1118-1170), Archbishop of Canterbury. Following his martyrdom an altar was placed at the site, which became a focus of pilgrimage. The sword in a sheath was a souvenir pilgrim badge popular in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>17</sup> These pilgrim badges were often mass-produced by means of casting moulds. A fourteenth-century example of a stone mould for a pilgrim badge shows a bishop on horseback, with another figure standing on the ground (fig.5.5).



Figure 5.5: Stone mould for a pilgrim badge; England; fourteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1890,10-2.1.

These objects were mostly manufactured in base metals, such as pewter or lead but there are instances of more costly materials being used. Visiting the shrine of Our Lady of

<sup>17</sup> Information taken from the Curator's Comments field in the catalogue record for BM, P&E 2001,7-2.7.

Boulogne in 1420, the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy acquired sixteen silver badges, while on a later visit to the same site in 1456 the Comte de Charolais bought five gold pilgrim badges.<sup>18</sup> Many extant pieces take on the form of the figures represented on them though there are pilgrim badges that are circular in form and are similar in appearance to the medal, such as the circular, lead-alloy pilgrim badge with a central figure of the head of St. John the Baptist.<sup>19</sup>

At a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries, London in 1908, Sir John Evans presented a group of twenty-one pilgrim badges. He acknowledged a shift in form and type from most pilgrim badges, the latter which he described as being ‘of a totally different character from those that are now exhibited, being formed of lead or pewter, having the devices in relief, and, as a rule, the outlines made to follow those of the figures forming the badges’.<sup>20</sup> It was noted by the then President of the Society and former Keeper of the department of British and Medieval Antiquities and Ethnography, Sir Charles Hercules Read (1857-1929), that the badges presented by Evans were similar in form to the sixteenth-century hat badges that are the subject of this section.<sup>21</sup> The jewels to which Read refers marked a shift from the religious and military spheres into the secular world. These new ornaments became adopted by men as personal jewels and have been termed *enseignes*.

This nomenclature has arisen from the Hackenbroch’s monograph on these jewels but it is misleading.<sup>22</sup> The term *enseigne* means ‘sign’ or ‘emblem’ and while many of the hat ornaments in portraiture and museum collections do display some iconography or emblematic device to convey the personal intent of the wearer or carry a visible message, there are a great number of hat ornaments that are purely decorative in nature. To ensure that no confusion arises and that all types of jewel worn in the hat are understood, the broader terms of ‘hat ornament’ and ‘hat jewel’ are adopted here.

Hackenbroch’s work serves as an excellent visual repository of this object type; it documents and illustrates a large corpus of material existing in many collections around the world. Nevertheless it fails to include all the types of jewels that were worn in the hat by men

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<sup>18</sup> L.E.S.J. de Laborde, *Les Ducs de Bourgogne*, part II: *Prevues*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1849-52), vol.1, pp.181, 465 cited in Joan Evans, *A History of Jewellery 1100-1870*, 2nd ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1970), p.79.

<sup>19</sup> British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1856, 7-1.5210.

<sup>20</sup> Sir John Evans, *Proceedings of Society of Antiquaries* XXII, 2nd series (1908): 102-17, pp.102-03.

<sup>21</sup> Evans, *Proceedings* (1908), p.117. The department of British and Medieval Antiquities and Ethnography underwent many name changes, until an amalgamation of its later incarnation as department of Medieval and Modern Europe with the department of Prehistory and Early Europe in 2003 led to the creation of the current department of Prehistory and Europe.

<sup>22</sup> Hackenbroch, *Enseignes*.

in the sixteenth century.<sup>23</sup> In spite of this, Hackenbroch's work has continued to exert influence on this area of scholarship. In describing a Renaissance hat ornament that was to be auctioned at a future sale, the author of the text writes that in the sixteenth century 'a man of standing might wear a badge on his hat or cap as a status symbol'.<sup>24</sup> Nonetheless, since the implementation of the Treasure Act on 24 September 1997 there has been a significant increase in the number of reported finds of ornaments that were worn in the hat. Such finds have allowed for a new understanding of this object type and have offered a different perspective about such items of jewellery than that given by Hackenbroch. As we have seen, the Treasure finds have provided material evidence that supports the non-elite wearing of such jewels. Examples in silver that seek to emulate more costly materials show that it is now opportune to re-examine these objects within this context. Furthermore, a group of cast copper-alloy plaquettes within the collections of the British Museum has been identified as ornaments for the hat. These too demand a place in the history of these male jewels. This chapter provides strong evidence, through object analysis, that this pan-European fashion was enjoyed by men across a broad social spectrum and, in doing so, moves away from considering this as an elite male jewel.

The shift into the secular world of these jewels for the hat is mostly summed up by the fact that such pieces were often of unique manufacture (and were very often commissioned), made of precious metals and materials, and were personal to the individual wearer. As with any items of material culture though it is impossible to apply hard and fast rules and there are always exceptions. Nevertheless, there is a marked difference between the hat ornament and its possible precursors. While a pilgrim badge stood as a visual symbol of a site visited by a pilgrim and a military badge served to identify and unite men of an army, an emblematic hat ornament could display a number of narratives, from political allegiances or religious intent to personality traits, as represented by recognisable iconography. Ultimately then, these were seen as highly personal jewels.

Pictorial evidence shows that these hat ornaments were popular jewels amongst European male elites in the sixteenth century. These images also reflect the variety in form and style that existed. A portrait of Charles VIII shows a square-shaped gold badge affixed to his cap, while Francis I (r.1515-1547), Henry VIII, the military figure Gian Galeazzo

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<sup>23</sup> A number of the jewels recorded by Hackenbroch have since been identified as nineteenth-century fakes.

<sup>24</sup> "A Mark of Distinction", *Bonhams Magazine*, Winter 2009, issue no. 21, p.8. The jewel was later sold at 'Fine Jewellery', 9 December 2009, London New Bond Street, lot no. 26 where it achieved a price of £48,000 including the buyer's premium.



Sanvitale (1496-1550), and Lord High Treasurer William Cecil (1521-1598) each wear a badge on their hats (figs.5.6-5.10).



Figure 5.6: Charles VIII; unknown; sixteenth century; after Jean Perreal. Musée Conde, PE 576.



Figure 5.7 : Francis I; Jean Clouet; 1515-1510. Musée Condee, PE 241.





Figure 5.8: Henry VIII; unknown; c.1520. National Portrait Gallery NPG 4690.



Figure 5.9: Gian Galeazzo Sanvitale; Francesco Mazzola detto il Parmigianino; 1524. Museo di Capodimonte, Naples Q111.



Figure 5.10: William Cecil; unknown; after 1585. National Portrait Gallery NPG 362.

Interestingly, the two English sitters shown above wear jewelled gold ornaments in their hats that are not particularly emblematic in nature. This may lend credence to Hackenbroch's assertion that 'Henry VIII rarely wore *enseignes*' and to her claim that, since contemporary portraiture representing these jewels is limited, 'they were rarely worn'.<sup>25</sup> According to Hackenbroch, Henry VIII wanted to distance himself from Continental Catholic rulers, particularly after the 1534 Act of Supremacy, and so ignored this item of male fashion. However, entries from Henry VIII's inventory indicate that he did own hat ornaments of an emblematic nature.

A Cappe of blacke vellat with a brouche of golde conteyneng divers parsonages and sett with vj Diamountes and five small Rubies [...]  
 A Cappe of blacke vellat with a Brouche of golde containeng vij parsonages a table Diamounte a rock Rubie xix small Rubies.<sup>26</sup>

Hackenbroch also states that Tudor hat jewels enjoyed a limited lifespan and attributes their rise only after the arrival of Hans Holbein the Younger (1497/98-1543) in London in the 1530s. Certainly, the care over the ornaments that are to be included in Holbein's portrait of William Parr (1513-1571), marquess of Northampton and brother of the

<sup>25</sup> Hackenbroch, *Enseignes*, p.324.

<sup>26</sup> Starkey, ed., *Inventory*, nos. 3262, 3264. See also no.3263 cited on p.140 above.

future queen, Katherine, and sketched on the preparatory drawing might support such a statement (fig.5.11).



Figure 5.11: William Parr, marquis of Northampton; Hans Holbein the younger; c.1538-1542; black and coloured chalks, white bodycolour, pen and ink, and brush and ink on pale pink prepared paper. The Royal Collection © 2012 HM Queen Elizabeth II, RL12231.

Nevertheless, if not all Tudor men did emulate the emblematic nature of this ornament they did still adopt the fashion for wearing jewels on their hats. Despatches of the Venetian embassy at France provide information on the presence of the English delegation in December 1518. These were written by the ambassador's secretary, Hironimo da Canal, from Paris on 17 December. The four English ambassadors present were the Lord Chamberlain, the Bishop of Ely, the Lord of St. John's, and the Captain of Guisnes.

The Lord Chamberlain was dressed in a vest of crimson satin, lined with sables, and there was a richly jewelled pendant in his cap [...] Near the ambassadors, but behind them, and also on either side, were some twenty English gentlemen, superbly dressed in vests of cloth of gold, with pendants on their bonnets, and chains around their necks and waists, and I even saw one with a girdle, loaded with jewels of immense value.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Sebastian Giustinian, *Four Years at the Court of Henry VIII. Selection of Despatches Written by the Venetian Ambassador, Sebastian Giustinian, and Addressed to the Signory of Venice, January 12th 1515, to July 26th 1519*, translated by Rawdon Brown, 2 vols. (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1854), vol.2, p.300 (Appendix 1).

Portraits of men wearing hat ornaments are so numerous that they are indicative of this fashion. Particular care over the depiction of these jewels in paintings is demonstrated by two works of the Venetian artist Bartolomeo Veneto (active 1502-1546), who was also active in Lombardy. *Portrait of a gentleman* (c.1512) shows an unknown subject in rich clothing, from the furred collar to the full sleeves of his gown (fig.5.12).



Figure 5.12: Portrait of a gentleman; Bartolomeo Veneto; c.1512. Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica di Palazzo Barberini, Rome.

In his hat is placed a circular gold and enamelled ornament with a design enclosed in a decorated frame. It contains the inscription 'Probasti et cognovisti' (You have tried and you have known) and this may allude to a section of Psalm 138: 'Domine, probasti me et cognovisti me' (Lord, you have tested me and you have known me).<sup>28</sup> Another gentleman painted by Veneto wears a broad-brimmed embroidered hat to which is affixed a gold and enamelled jewel depicting a shipwreck. The legend 'ESPERANCE ME GUIDE' (Hope guides me) is placed in a banner to the top of the image (fig.5.13).

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<sup>28</sup> Psalm 138:2 of The Latin Vulgate version of the Bible. In English versions of the Bible this becomes Psalm 139:2.





Figure 5.13: Portrait of a Man; Bartolomeo Veneto; sixteenth century. Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge inv. no. 133.

Evidence of actual jewels is recorded pictorially in the inventory of the jewels belonging to Albrecht V (1528-1579), duke of Bavaria and his wife Anna (1528-1590) by the court painter Hans Mielich (1516-1573), made between 1552 and 1556. This book is known as *Kleinodienbuch der Herzogin Anna von Bayern* (Jewellery Book of Anna of Bavaria) and has been in the possession of the Bavarian State Library in Munich since 1 March 1843 when it was gifted by the Bavarian king Ludwig I (r.1825-1848).<sup>29</sup> Amongst the one hundred and eight illuminations of the seventy-one jewelled possessions of the Duke and Duchess are two pieces that were almost certainly worn as hat jewels (figs.5.14-5.15). Although neither survives – in fact of the entire corpus of jewels depicted by Mielich a collar of the Order of St George is the only known surviving object – they both offer direct parallels with extant hat jewels.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup> BSB Cod.icon. 429 (Munich, 1552-1556), Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich and referred to hereinafter as *Hans Mielich Inventory*. Accessible online at <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.wdl/demnbsb.4104>. For a note of the gift by Ludwig I, see f.lv.

<sup>30</sup> 'Mielich (or Muelich), Hans' in Harold Newman, *An Illustrated Dictionary of Jewelry* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005). The collar is currently within the Schatzkammer collections of the Munich Residenz, Germany – Evans, *History*, p.106.



Figure 5.14: Manuscript illumination of a gold, enamelled and diamond-set hat ornament depicting Hercules standing before Eurystheus and inscribed 'AD NVLLIVS PAVESCIT OCCVRSVM' (He fears the attack of no-one); Hans Mielich, 1552-1556.<sup>31</sup>



Figure 5.15: Manuscript illumination of a gold, enamelled and diamond-set hat ornament with a scene showing the discovery of the writing of Homer by Numa Pompilius and inscribed 'QVAE LATVERE DIV IN LVCEM NOSTRA ATTVLIT AETAS' (Things that have remained hidden our age has brought to light); Hans Mielich, 1552-1556.<sup>32</sup>

The quality of these two jewels is befitting of their owners. Within the collections of the British Museum are two hat ornaments that are much cruder in their execution and style. They have been identified as being of English manufacture and, on stylistic grounds, as products of the same workshop.<sup>33</sup> Dated to just before the mid-sixteenth century, both share

<sup>31</sup> *Hans Mielich Inventory*, f.6r. Translation of inscription taken from Hugh Tait, *Catalogue of the Waddesdon Bequest in the British Museum: The Jewels*, 3 vols. (London: British Museum Press, 1986), vol.1, p.62 and the identification of the scene from Yvonne Hackenbroch, *Renaissance Jewellery* (London: Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1979), p.76.

<sup>32</sup> *Hans Mielich Inventory*, f.6v. Translation of inscription taken from Tait, *Catalogue*, vol.1, p.62 and the identification of the scene from Hackenbroch, *Renaissance Jewellery*, p.76.

<sup>33</sup> Hugh Tait, "An Anonymous Loan to the British Museum. I: Renaissance Jewellery", *The Connoisseur*, 154, no. 621 (November 1963): 147-53, pp.147-48.

the same distinctly Protestant iconography: the New Testament story of the meeting at the well between Christ and the woman of Samaria. They are gold and decorated with polychrome enamels (figs.5.16-5.17). Unlike the jewels depicted by Mielich these pieces are not set with gemstones, precious or otherwise. This could suggest ownership by a wealthy urban citizen, rather than a courtly man.



Figure 5.16: Gold and enamelled hat ornament of Christ's meeting the Woman of Samaria at the well, inscribed '+ OF. A TREWTHE. \* THOW. ART. THE. TREW. MESSIAS.'; c.1540; England. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1955,5-7.1.



Figure 5.17: Gold and enamelled hat ornament of Christ's meeting the Woman of Samaria at the well; c.1530-1540; England. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1983, 11-2.1.

Clearly visible on both pieces are loops for attachment: angular and rounded, respectively. These loops allowed for the jewel to be sewn onto a man's cap and these are also seen in the portrait above of Charles VIII (fig.5.6) and the Hans Mielich drawings (figs.5.14-5.15). The composition of the central figures in both pieces respects the circularity of the whole. An examination of the reverse of each reveals the method of manufacture

(figs.5.18-5.19). This in turn may offer further information about how jewels of this sort were purchased.



Figure 5.18: Reverse of gold and enamelled hat ornament. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1955,5-7.1.



Figure 5.19: Reverse of gold and enamelled hat ornament. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1983, 11-2.1.

These jewels have been made in a similar manner: the relief figural group has been applied by means of butterfly clips fastened to the back-plate, which is likely to have been cast with its frame, to which have been soldered the four attachment loops. Given the nature of construction, it is possible that a goldsmith would have retained a stock of back-plates and a selection of relief scenes with different imagery from which a customer could make his choice. The scale of these two pieces differs somewhat: the jewel with the inscription on the well has diameter of about 5.8 centimetres and weighs thirty-four grams; and the second ornament, a later acquisition for the British Museum, is 3.3 centimetres in diameter and



weighs twelve grams. The availability of smaller jewels in gold would have widened the market for such objects. It is also possible that the larger scale of the first piece would have been more suited to prominently displaying the inscription, thus making the wearer's Protestant beliefs clear.<sup>34</sup>

Biblical stories and tales from classical mythology or common folklore were all legitimate sources for the iconography of these jewels. Art historical knowledge provides a modern audience with an understanding of the wearer's intent, but for contemporaries in an age in which the visual was pervasive the message was presumably clear. The images that appeared on these jewels were chosen to reflect the political allegiances, religious affiliations, or personality traits of the owner. The choice of subject may also have been influenced by popular imagery.

A jewel with a distinctly humanist flavour is referred to in the sixteenth-century literary work by the French author François Rabelais (1494-1553), *Gargantua*. The eighth chapter provides a description of the protagonist's dress and it may be seen as a fair indication of contemporary clothing and jewellery. Gargantua's cap is adorned with a jewel: 'for his emblem he had, on a plate of gold weighing sixty-eight marks, a figure of expert enamelling'.<sup>35</sup> Rabelais describes the imagery on this piece as being the double human figure that features within Plato's *Symposium* as the mystical origin of man. It also bears a Greek inscription that captions the image.

The tale from Greek mythology of Laocoon and his sons being attacked and killed by serpents was of particular interest in sixteenth-century Italy following the discovery in Rome in 1506 of the famous ancient marble group now in the Vatican (fig.5.20).

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<sup>34</sup> According to Hackenbroch many of these English 'ornaments show a predominance of Old Testament themes'. She attributes this to a strong desire to avoid association with Catholic interpretations, as this was at a time when Henry VIII was embattled with the Pope over his wish to divorce his queen, Catherine of Aragon (1485-1536) – Hackenbroch, *Renaissance Jewellery*, p.281.

<sup>35</sup> 'Pour son image avoit, en une platine d'or pesant soixante et huyt marcs, une figure d'esmail competent' – François Rabelais, *Gargantua* (Paris: Editions de la Sirè, 1919), p.41.



Figure 5.20: Marble sculpture of Laocoon and his sons; first century BCE. Museo Pio-Clementino, Vatican City Inv.1059, inv.1064, inv.1067.

On 3 September 1512 Federigo Gonzaga (1500-1540) wrote to his mother Isabella d'Este (1474-1539) from Rome and described the possible commission of a hat ornament showing this figural group.

Theobaldo told me that Caradosso would be pleased to execute for Your Excellence or for me a Laocoon with his sons and the serpent, made of gold relief, like the one of marble, raised with a hammer and not cast [...] Furthermore, if it would please you he would render this Laocoon in the form of a medallion of half relief, to wear in a hat.<sup>36</sup>

The goldsmith, sculptor and medallist Cristoforo di Giovanni Matteo Foppa (1452-1527), known as Caradosso, never executed this piece.<sup>37</sup>

A gilded and cast bronze roundel in the British Museum's collections gives some indication of what this jewel may have looked like (fig.5.21). Although it lacks the characteristic loops for attachment the wreathed frame is pierced with eight holes, by means of which the piece could be fastened to a man's cap. This object is about 4.75 centimetres in diameter and weighs twenty-three grams.

<sup>36</sup> Cited in Hackenbroch, *Renaissance Jewellery*, p.17.

<sup>37</sup> A. Bertolotti, "Le Arti Minori alla Corte di Mantova" in *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, V (Milan, 1888), p.496 cited in Hackenbroch, *Enseignes*, p.161, note 54.



Figure 5.21: Gilt-bronze hat ornament with Laocöon and his sons; Italy; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1915,12-16.134.

The quality of the Caradosso commission would have far exceeded this example, not only from its materiality but also through the mode of its production. Caradosso was to have made the jewel using the technique of embossing (or repoussé), which involved using a small hammer to form the relief decoration from the reverse.<sup>38</sup> The bronze piece has been cast and this is evident from examining its reverse, which remains flat. Casting enabled multiple similar copies to be produced and therefore the jewel would not be unique.

In his *Treatises* Cellini compares his methods of manufacturing jewels for the hat with those used by Caradosso.<sup>39</sup> The main difference being that while Caradosso favoured making a bronze cast of a wax model of the object then working the gold over the bronze, Cellini avoided the need for a bronze cast and used the wax model to guide him as he worked the gold. Though from the Gonzaga correspondence, it would appear that Caradosso did not always insist on casting hat ornaments. Cellini continues his writings by describing a commission that he made for a Sienese gentleman named Girolamo Marretta of a jewel showing Hercules and the Nemean lion. He took such care and patience over this work that a visit by the lauded artist Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475-1564) led to glowing praise of Cellini's skill.

<sup>38</sup> 'embossing' in Harold Newman, *An Illustrated Dictionary of Jewelry* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005).

<sup>39</sup> Cellini, *Trattati*, pp.72-76.

If this work had been large, or of marble or of bronze, formed with this good design, it would astonish the world, since of this size I see it as so beautiful, that I would never believe that these ancient goldsmiths would have made it so well.<sup>40</sup>

The British Museum has in its collections further examples of hat ornaments that would have been worn by men within court circles. In addition to the two English Protestant jewels, there are three Continental pieces and they came to the British Museum in the late-nineteenth century as part of the Waddesdon Bequest. These jewels have been catalogued extensively in Hugh Tait's 1986 publication and, where necessary and possible, the objects presented in this work were taken apart to understand better their manufacture.<sup>41</sup> The three hat ornaments are all made of gold and have been enamelled. Additionally they are set with gemstones. They show scenes of a varied nature: a tale from the New Testament, a story of Greek mythology, and the legend of St George and the dragon. Each bore a meaning that the wearer wished to convey as indicative of his beliefs or personality. The use of bright enamels and precious gemstones would have stood out vividly against the black foil of contemporary headgear and so the intent of the owner was overt.

The circular badge showing the New Testament scene of the Conversion of Saul has four loops for attachment located on the frame and there is an additional loop at the top of the jewel which suggests that it was used later as a pendant (fig.5.22).



Figure 5.22: Gold and enamelled hat ornament set with diamonds, rubies, and possibly a garnet showing the Conversion of Saul; Italy or Spain; mid-sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe WB.171.

<sup>40</sup> 'Se questa opera fussi grande, o di marmo o di bronzo, condotta con questo bel disegno, la farebbe stupire il mondo, sì che di questa grandezza io la veggo tanto bella, che io non credo mai che quegli orefici antichi facessero tanto bene' – Cellini, *Trattati*, p.76.

<sup>41</sup> Tait, *Catalogue*, vol.1.

The scene is surrounded by a tubular frame which is enamelled black and has gold relief lettering which bears the inscription 'DVRVM EST TIBI COMTRA STIMVLVM CALCITRARE'. The reverse of the jewel comprises a flat gold panel with an inscription in Italian stating how this ornament had been worn in the hat of Don John of Austria (1547-1578), who then passed it on to the military figure Camillo Capizucchi (1537-1597). There is no sufficient documentary evidence to support ownership by either individual, but the materials used and the execution of this piece, along with its similarity to the Mielich jewels, are highly suggestive of a courtly jewel that may have been owned once by the half-brother of Philip II of Spain (1527-1598). Both Don John and Capizucchi took part in the Battle of Lepanto on 7 October 1571 with Capizucchi proving his military skills to such a degree in the later Mediterranean campaigns that Don John made him captain of the cavalry on 7 April 1573.<sup>42</sup> It is possible that a member of the Capizucchi family wished to commemorate the gift for posterity by placing the inscribed gold disc on the reverse.

The back panel was removed for the purposes of Tait's publication and it was discovered that the figural decoration had been achieved by using the technique of embossing. Some elements of particularly high relief, such as St Paul's right leg, had been modelled separately and then applied before enamelling the whole.<sup>43</sup> The gemstones have been affixed by means of bolting their settings into place. The design of this piece, with the diamonds integrated fluidly within the scene (in this instance forming the architectural features), bears strong resemblance to the drawings of Etienne Delaune (1518-1583) in the Albertina (fig.5.23) A similar treatment of the setting of gemstones in jewels of this type is present in the drawings by Mielich in the sixteenth-century inventory of court jewels from Bavaria (see figs. 5.14-5.15).

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<sup>42</sup> Mirella Giansante, "Capizucchi, Camillo" in *Dizionario Nazionale deli Italiani*, edited by Serena Andreotti (Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana fondato da Giovanni Treccani, 1975; accessed at [http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/camillo-capizucchi\\_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/camillo-capizucchi_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/) on 26 June 2012).

<sup>43</sup> Tait, *Catalogue*, vol.1, p.61.





Figure 5.23: Etienne Delaune; ‘Aeneas on his way to the Underworld’ (possibly); c.1550. Albertina Museum, Vienna, inv. no. 11159.

The online catalogue for the Albertina identifies tentatively the iconography within this drawing as that of Aeneas entering the Underworld.<sup>44</sup> However, Hackenbroch has suggested that an alternative reading of this image may be of that of the *Miles Christianus* from *Enchiridion militis christiani* or *Handbook of a Christian soldier* by the humanist scholar Desiderius Erasmus (1467-1536), first published in Antwerp in 1503.<sup>45</sup> The message conveyed through such symbolism is of a Christian soldier exposed to the temptations of the world, who is undeterred from the path of virtue. He is shown as a rider able to control a horse without reins and as such he is impervious to sin and passion, which are represented by the wild animals and fire. This was clearly a suitable visual to be placed on a hat ornament, as a demonstration of a man’s resolute nature and devotion to God.

The Conversion of Saul jewel is 4.5 by 4.7 centimetres at its widest points, so not too dissimilar from the size of Delaune’s intended pieces, and it weighs thirty-four grams. A much larger jewel shows the figure of St George on horseback slaying a dragon. (fig.5.24). It is oval in form and its overall height is 7.3 centimetres with a width of 5.9 centimetres, and it weighs a substantial seventy-five grams. Despite its size this jewel was intended as a hat ornament (albeit a rather heavy one) as four loops for attachment are fixed to its reverse, one of which is just visible in the lower right of the image.

<sup>44</sup> See <http://sammlungenonline.albertina.at/default.aspx?lng=english#bd0c4cb5-d1f2-4f23-9a3e-f227a1b98177>, accessed on 14 June 2012. See also Eckhart Knab and Heinz Widauer, *Die Zeichnungen Der Französischen Schule: Von Clouet Bis Le Brun* (Vienna: im Selbstverlag der Albertina, 1993), cat. no. 27.

<sup>45</sup> Hackenbroch, *Enseignes*, p.56 and fig.59.



Figure 5.24: Gold and enamelled hat ornament set with diamonds, emeralds, and rubies with detail showing a rivet on the reverse, with St George slaying the dragon; France; 1551-1575. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe WB.172.

The ground has been embossed in low relief, while the figural group (appearing in high relief) is attached to the background by means of rivets and these are evident on the reverse. Once more the use of precious gemstones has been employed to integrate effectively with the whole design. Only the five table-cut rubies set into the frame provide mere decoration.

The final example of a sixteenth-century hat ornament within the Waddesdon Bequest shows the Judgment of Paris (fig.5.25).



Figure 5.25: Gold and enamelled hat ornament set with peridot and sapphire, bordered by garnets showing the Judgment of Paris; Italy or France; mid-sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe WB.152.

The weight of this piece is more comparable to the Conversion of Saul jewel, being 35 grams. It is oval in shape and has a width of 4.8 centimetres, while its height is 4.2 centimetres. The gem-set border is unexpected on a jewel of this type from the sixteenth century. More usual was an enamelled frame. On closer inspection it becomes clear that this is a later feature, probably added between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>46</sup> This hat ornament has been altered further: the two gemstones set within the relief are not original; and a modern convex back has been added to convert the jewel into a brooch (fig.5.26).



Figure 5.26: Reverse of the Judgement of Paris hat ornament: on the left, with its modern backing; and on the right, how it originally looked.

When the modern backing was first removed from this jewel in 1962 it revealed that this object had been made using the casting process, and had not been embossed.<sup>47</sup> This is particularly unusual for gold hat ornaments, since they were mostly unique in their production. The costs of time and money involved in producing a base metal model from which a mould would be created to pour in the liquid gold would have been significantly high for the creation of a single commission. Tait has speculated, therefore, whether copies of this jewel in base metal were required by the patron to distribute publicly, thus explaining why the Judgment of Paris piece has been cast.<sup>48</sup> It would have been more customary to produce a gold ornament of this type by embossing.

The backing applied to the Judgement of Paris hat jewel converted this object into a brooch for a woman. This raises interesting issues with regards to the alteration of Renaissance jewels in general, but more pertinently, to the change of use of hat ornaments. Given the relatively short history of the hat jewel, many of them were altered after they fell

<sup>46</sup> Hugh Tait, "Historiated Tudor Jewellery", *Antiquaries Journal* 42, part 2, (1962): 226-46, p.243.

<sup>47</sup> Tait, "Historiated Tudor Jewellery", p.243.

<sup>48</sup> Tait, *Catalogue*, vol.1, p.84.



out of fashion in the later years of the sixteenth century. There is pictorial evidence of this practice occurring much earlier, in the 1540s.

A portrait by Holbein of an unknown lady and only discovered in the mid-twentieth century shows her wearing a brooch affixed to the front of her bodice.<sup>49</sup> It is a circular medallion with an enamelled scene of the Judgement of Paris enclosed in a gold border. Clearly visible against her black clothing are four hoops protruding from the brooch. This suggests strongly that the object's original use was as a hat ornament and it is probably being worn by the unidentified woman as a token of remembrance of the ornament's male owner. The original jewel has been altered slightly: it is surmounted by a large stone within a gold setting surrounded by a wreathed border, perhaps to make it a more suitable jewel for a woman. A second portrait of an unknown lady (possibly Lady Jane Grey), dated to the early 1550s and by the Flemish painter Hans Ewouts (fl.1540-1574), in the Fitzwilliam Museum (PD.1-1963) shows a gold circular medallion worn in a similar manner. Although the loops for attachment are not visible, stylistically it would appear to be a converted hat ornament.

Since this type of jewel was subject to change of use, identification of hat ornaments in museum collections is problematic. It is likely that there are many extant pieces within museums that were intended originally to be placed in the cap but they are now unrecognisable as such. A sixteenth-century gold embossed plaque chased with a battle scene within the collections of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge was originally accessioned in the top of a box (fig.5.27). It has since been catalogued as being a plaque that was once set within a hat badge.<sup>50</sup> It was probably originally enamelled, but this has now been lost.

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<sup>49</sup> Paul Ganz, "A Newly Discovered Lady's Portrait by Hans Holbein the Younger", *The Connoisseur* CXXX, no. 528 (October 1952): 82-84, 136.

<sup>50</sup> See the online collections record for object number MAR.M.283-1912 - <http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/dept/aa/opac/cataloguedetail.html?&preref=119032&function=xslt&limit=10>.



Figure 5.27: Gold hat ornament embossed with a battle scene; Italy; sixteenth century. Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge MAR.M.283-1912.

Plaques that are painted with Limoges enamels are particularly difficult to determine, for they may have been subject to multiple uses. Hackenbroch records four such hat ornaments in her monograph.<sup>51</sup> The French artist and potter Bernard Palissy (1510-1589) commented on the wearing of Limoges enamelled badges in the hat within his treatises.

I am certain of having seen to give for three sols the dozen figures for *enseignes* that were worn on hats. These *enseignes* were so well worked and their enamels so well fused on the copper, that there was never any painting so pleasant.<sup>52</sup>

Cheaper to purchase than gold jewels, objects of this type were probably worn by gentlemen in imitation of courtly practice. Within the collections of the British Museum are a number of such plaques of varying size that may have been used originally as hat ornaments, though they were not originally catalogued as such.

A circular copper plaque painted with Limoges enamels with the scene of the Resurrection of Christ is stamped on the reverse with the mark of the workshop of the mid-sixteenth century French artist Jean Pénicaud II (fig.5.28). There is significant loss of enamelling to the upper right and bottom of the object. At the four compass points are pierced holes, which provide strong evidence that this plaque was intended to be sewn onto clothing. It is significantly larger in size than the gold examples that have been examined so far, with an overall diameter of 7.7 centimetres. However, it weighs only twenty-nine grams. It is

<sup>51</sup> Hackenbroch, *Enseignes*, figs.95-96, 98-99.

<sup>52</sup> 'Je m'assure avoir vu donner pur trois sols la douzaine des figures d'enseignes que l'en portoit aux bonnets, lasquelles enseignes estoient si bieng labourées et leurs esmaux si bien parfondus sur le cuivre, qu'il n'y avoit nulle peinture si plaisante' – Bernard Palissy, *Les Oeuvres* (Paris, 1880), p.374 cited in Hackenbroch, *Enseignes*, p.82. I am grateful to Corinne Thepaut-Cabasset of the Victoria and Albert Museum for providing assistance with some of this translation.

impossible to say with certainty whether this was ever worn as a hat ornament but there is no reason to suppose that it was not.



Figure 5.28: Circular, copper plaque painted with Limoges enamels, possibly worn as a hat ornament; workshop of Jean Pénicaud II; France; c.1555. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1855,3-5.3.

Perhaps more puzzling are those enamelled plaques that are painted *en grisaille*, since the muted monochrome palette would not have stood out as well against dark fabrics. The use of a small copper roundel showing a cavalry skirmish that is set into a parcel gilt frame is unclear (fig.5.29).<sup>53</sup> The frame is certainly suggestive of the tubular type that is seen on examples such as the Conversion of Saul jewel but there are no clear indications of how this would have been attached to a cap. A broken section of metal visible on the reverse may provide a clue. This may have been one of four original loops with which the object was fastened in a man's cap.



Figure 5.29: Circular, copper roundel painted with Limoges enamels *en grisaille* and set into a partially gilded frame, possibly worn as a hat ornament; workshop of Jean Pénicaud II; France; c.1540. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1855,12-1.20.

<sup>53</sup> Diameter of roundel: 2.8 centimetres; diameter including frame: 3.7 centimetres; weight: 11 grams.

A painted enamelled badge showing Jacob dressed as a Roman warrior with a man kneeling before him, whose hands are raised in supplication, provides evidence of how these enamelled plaques were often set into a variety of objects (fig.5.30). The copper badge is dated to around 1560 but it has been set into a seventeenth-century square mount covered with red silk and decorated with gold thread and seed pearls. It has been fastened to the mount by means of two pierced holes, which were probably used originally to affix it to a man's cap. The roundel was presumably set within the mount after it had become redundant as a hat jewel.



Figure 5.30: Circular, copper roundel painted with Limoges enamels and bearing the inscription 'SANCTE IACOBE', possibly worn as a hat ornament and now set within an embroidered silk mount; possibly the workshop of Couly Nouhailher II (fl.1539-1545) (plaque); France (plaque); c.1560 (plaque); England (mount); seventeenth century (mount). British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1928,10-15.1.

The Palissy quotation offers contemporary evidence that hat ornaments painted with Limoges enamels were worn by men in their hats. While he describes seeing these as 'pleasant', these examples could not match the effect created by gold examples with their contrasts of high and low relief. The enamelled pieces were most likely used by men outside of courtly circles and those wealthy urban citizens. For men of more humble means, these pieces provided them with a way of accessing the latest sixteenth-century fashion at a fraction of the cost. However, such men were not restricted only to the less dynamic, two-dimensional form of the enamelled roundel. The relief decoration of the gold hat ornaments could be replicated in base metal and there is strong evidence in favour of this practice.

Within the collections of the British Museum is a group of objects catalogued as plaquettes. This group came to the Museum as a gift in 1915 from the collector Thomas

Whitcombe Greene (1842-1932), who donated his entire collection of plaquettes.<sup>54</sup> The term is a nineteenth-century invention that describes a series of small Renaissance works that were adopted for a variety of uses.<sup>55</sup> In her doctoral thesis, Marika Annikki Leino defines plaquettes as ‘small, generally one-sided, bronze, lead or precious metal reliefs’.<sup>56</sup> An examination of the reverse of these objects reveals that the low reliefs were produced either through casting or repoussé work.

These plaquettes take on a variety of shapes: circular, rectangular, or irregular.<sup>57</sup> They were originally believed to have been created merely to act as records of goldsmiths’ work, including ornaments worn in the hat.

We designate under the term plaquettes, amongst amateurs, small low reliefs of bronze which seem to us to have had as their purpose the recording of the memory of works of the greatest Italian Renaissance goldsmiths [...] *enseignes, emblems or small medals* which you would affix to your hat [...] You would draw from these beautiful works an imprint in sulphur, or colour them in bronze, to retain the memory of them and to serve as a model and example.<sup>58</sup>

Only a few years following this statement, it was acknowledged that bronze plaquettes were being produced independently of gold counterparts and thus they were small sculptural creations in their own right.<sup>59</sup> Molinier believed that they became a means of disseminating imagery from works of art throughout the Italian peninsula quickly. When devoid of their context in museums, it is perhaps easy to appreciate how this art-historical understanding of these objects developed in the nineteenth century. However, by applying a more interdisciplinary approach and by considering plaquettes as items of material culture (and not simply as vehicles of disseminating art) it is possible to attempt to establish what these objects may have been used for.

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<sup>54</sup> G.F. Hill, "The Whitcombe Greene Plaquettes", *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 30, no. 168 (Mar., 1917): 103-10, p.103.

<sup>55</sup> Emile Molinier, *Les Bronzes De La Renaissance. Les Plaquettes* (Paris: Musee du Louvre, 1886), vii.

<sup>56</sup> Marika Annikki Leino, "Italian Renaissance Plaquettes in Context", University of London, unpublished PhD thesis, 2003, p.20.

<sup>57</sup> Leino, "Plaquettes", p.21.

<sup>58</sup> 'On désigne sous le nom de *plaquettes*, parmi les amateurs, de petits bas-reliefs de bronze qui nous paraissent avoir eu pour objet de conserver le souvenir des ouvrages des meilleurs orfèvres de la Renaissance italienne [...] *enseignes, impresse ou medagiette* que l'on attachait aux bonnets [...] On tirait de ces beaux ouvrages des empreintes en soufre, ou on les coulait en bronze, pour en garder la mémoire et pour servir de modèle et d'exemple' – Eugène Piot, "Les Plaquettes De La Renaissance" in *L'Art Ancien À L'Exposition De 1878*, edited by Louis Gonse, 414-418 (Paris : A Quantin, 1879), p.414.

<sup>59</sup> Molinier, *Les Plaquettes*, viii-ix.

Leino attempts to contextualise fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italian examples and one use for these objects that she identifies is as hat badges.<sup>60</sup> A discrete group of cast bronze (copper alloy) roundels that form a part of the British Museum's holdings of plaquettes can be readily attributed as hat ornaments (figs.5.31-5.41). So while pictorial representations of an elite class of men wearing such items and the many extant pieces made of gold and enamel or set with precious gemstones have propagated the belief that such items were the preserve of men at court, these bronze objects suggest that the fashion for the emblematic hat jewel reached lower levels of society. By considering these bronze plaquettes within the history of hat ornaments marks a shift from Hackenbroch's approach in viewing these as courtly jewels. It moves away from the nineteenth-century view that plaquettes were records of either goldsmiths' work or works of art. This in turn highlights the production and wearing of non-precious metal jewellery by men.



Figure 5.31: Obverse and reverse of gilded cast bronze hat ornament (some loss to the gilding) with two pierced holes for attachment, possibly showing the Rape of Lucretia within a garlanded frame; diameter, 3.77cm; Italy; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1915,12-16.125.

<sup>60</sup> Leino, "Plaquettes", chapter 6. Of the 533 plaquettes within Leino's database, only thirty-three show any physical signs that they were used as hat ornaments – p.131.





Figure 5.32: Obverse and reverse of gilded cast bronze hat ornament (some loss to the gilding) with two pierced holes for attachment and depicting Marcus Curtius on horseback leaping into a gulf of flames; diameter, 3.3cm; weight, 12 grams; Italy; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1915,1216.128.



Figure 5.33: Cast and gilded bronze hat ornament with holes pierced within the hollowed out frame, depicting the obscure literary subject of Minos enthroned judging who is the greatest hero of classical Antiquity – Scipio Africanus, Alexander the Great, or Hannibal – all of whom are seated at his feet; diameter, 4.2cm; weight, 21 grams; Germany; c.1550. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1915,12-16.130.



Figure 5.34: Cast and gilded bronze hat ornament depicting Apollo in armour while Daphne changes into a laurel; diameter, 3.6cm; weight, 18 grams; Italy; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1912,12-16.131.



Figure 5.35: Embossed, gilded bronze hat ornament with two holes pierced at the top and bottom, showing Marcus Curtius leaping in to a gulf of flames, enclosed within a strapwork frame with two satyrs at the sides and a grotesque head at the base; diameter, 4.7cm; weight, 31 grams; Italy; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1915,12-16.132.



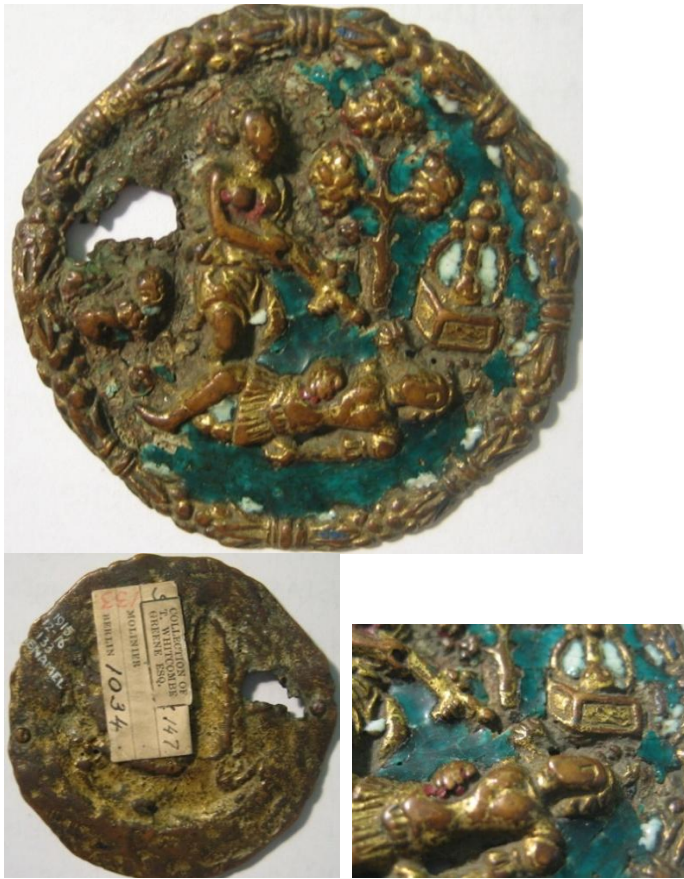


Figure 5.36: Embossed bronze hat ornament with traces of gilding and remains of green, red, and blue enamel depicting a scene from the tale of Pyramus and Thisbe which is enclosed within a garlanded border; diameter, 5cm; weight, 23 grams; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1915,12-16.133.



Figure 5.37: Cast and gilded bronze hat ornament depicting Laocoon and his son overcome by a serpent, enclosed within a floral wreath border pierced with eight holes; diameter, 4.75cm; weight, 23 grams; Italy; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1915,12-16.134.



Figure 5.38: Cast and gilded bronze hat ornament showing the classical tale of the Judgement of Paris – Paris is shown sleeping at the foot of a tree, while Hermes stands over him and the three goddesses (Athena, Hera, and Aphrodite) are depicted in very low relief in the background; diameter, 3.6cm; weight, 18 grams; Germany; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1915,12-16.135.



Figure 5.39: Gilded bronze hat ornament with a forward-facing bust of a female figure, probably the goddess Diana, which has been applied to the backplate with a single rivet (visible on the reverse) and is enclosed within a wreathed floral and trefoil border pierced in seven places; diameter, 3.7cm; weight, 15 grams; Italy; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1915,12-16.136.





Figure 5.40: Gilded and cast hat ornament depicting an angel standing before St Matthew who is seated and writing in an open book upon his knees, all contained within wreath frame which is pierced twice at the sides; diameter, 3.6cm; weight, 18 grams; Italy; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1915,12-16.226.



Figure 5.41: Cast bronze hat ornament with traces of gilding showing the Fall of Phaethon, enclosed within a frame that is pierced with four holes for attachment; diameter, 4.3cm; weight, 15 grams; Italy; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1915,12-16.298.

These objects were catalogued previously only under the term ‘plaquette’ and while the term of ‘hat ornament’ has been added to the records for the pieces illustrated above, such identification must be approached with caution. Particular attributes that show affinity with gold hat ornaments signal the possible presence of a bronze object once worn in the hat. Circular in form, the borders of these bronze plaquettes are often pierced with holes to enable

fastening to a cap. Each object is either gilded or has traces of gilding; they are of comparable size to the precious metal examples; and they imitate stylistically the emblematic hat jewels, with the depiction of a symbolic image. While the enamelled gold or gem-set pieces show a variety of themes, ranging from the religious to the classical and the humanist, these gilt-bronze pieces bear scenes only relating to Antiquity.

The vast majority of these gilt-bronze ornaments, in a manner similar to the medieval pilgrim badge, have been cast. This would have facilitated the production of multiple copies and with the mould already made, there would be minimal cost involved in the fashioning of the ornament. This in turn suggests that these were adopted by men of a lower social standing in imitation of the elite fashion. Casting removed any personal associations that may have been incorporated within the jewel but the inclusion of recognisable classical themes or characters ensured that the message of the jewel was clearly understood. The few examples that show repoussé work are puzzling but they may provide examples of a model that was to be made in gold but executed first in base metal to be shown to a patron for approval.

By gilding and enamelling these bronze plaquettes (see the Pyramus and Thisbe plaque, fig.5.36) very little, if any, of the base metal was visible. When placed on a dark coloured hat, at the apex of the body, an object such as this would have been virtually indiscernible from the gold hat jewels so popular with rulers and noblemen. So for a man who could not afford ornaments of precious metal, these bronze equivalents provided a way for him to participate in contemporary fashions. The identification then of hat ornaments from amongst the British Museum's holdings of copper alloy plaquettes has been crucial in revealing that the hat ornament was not only a courtly jewel. Pictorial evidence has provided a bias in favour of this being an elite object but within this period only the wealthy would have commissioned their portraits. The limitations of portraiture are therefore apparent and using material culture as evidence offers another perspective; in this case, one that writes non-elite men into the history of the emblematic hat ornament.

Demonstrating one's character and personal, political or religious allegiances through personal adornment knew no class boundaries. As such, the bronze hat ornaments conveyed messages no less important than their high-end counterparts. Despite not being as intrinsically as valuable as objects made of gold and set with gemstones, these ornaments nevertheless communicated meaning in the contexts in which they circulated. So although perhaps being considered inferior to the more luxurious examples worn by noblemen and courtly individuals, they remained no less capable of contributing towards forming and articulating a man's identity within the early modern period.

The fashion for the emblematic hat ornament of the medallic type, as discussed in this chapter, ended in the later years of the sixteenth century. This did not mean though that jewels disappeared altogether from the hat and by the early-seventeenth century the aigrette was the most popular type. This was worn by both men and women and was designed to either hold a plume of feathers or the jewel itself took on the stylised form of feathers. A changing aesthetic in jewellery in this period, which favoured an abundance of gemstones over the art of the goldsmith and enameller, meant that the emblematic and decorative hat ornament was no longer a desired object.

In his dictionary of 1660 James Howell provides an entry within the section listing men's apparel for 'a gold hat-band' with the Italian translation as 'cordone di scintillo', the latter being evocative of the glistening and shimmering effect of the jewels.<sup>61</sup> Pictorial evidence seems to suggest that this type of jewel was worn as early as the second half of the sixteenth century. There are no entries within Howell's lexicon that can be associated with cap-hooks or the emblematic hat ornament, which provides strong evidence in favour of these particular fashions having become outmoded by the seventeenth century. Along with the hat-band, Howell mentions a variety of feathers, which were worn popularly with the new aigrette-style jewel.

Hat-bands, along with the aigrette, no longer bore significant iconography; rather they were richly encrusted with precious gemstones when worn by the elite, such as the 'riche hatband all of Dyamants with a great Jewell toe it in forme of a Rose' that had been ordered by Henry, Prince of Wales (1594-1612) prior to his death.<sup>62</sup> Both the aigrette and hat-band seemed to suit the new fashions of headgear that became fashionable in the Jacobean period, as is evidenced from pictorial representations. The taller, stiffer style of hats demanded a more noticeable jewel and the aigrette was perfectly suited for this (fig.5.42).

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<sup>61</sup> James Howell, *Lexicon Tetraglotton, an English-French-Italian-Spanish Dictionary: Whereunto Is Adjoined a Large Nomenclature of the Proper Terms (in All the Four) Belonging to Several Arts and Sciences, to Recreations, to Professions Both Liberal and Mechanik, &c. Divided into Fiftie Two Sections; with Another Volume of the Choicest Proverbs* (London: J.G. for Cornelius Bee, 1660), section xxxiii, unnumbered pages.

<sup>62</sup> William Bray, "An Account of the Revenue, the Expences, the Jewels, &c. of Prince Henry", *Archaeologica* XV, (1806): 13-26, p.19.



Figure 5.42: Detail of portrait of King James I of England and VI of Scotland, showing a diamond-set aigrette (the Feather Jewel); after John Critz the Elder; c.1606. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 548.

The hat ornament was an important item of jewellery that contributed to constructing a man's image within the early modern period. It developed from ideas prevalent within the early years of the sixteenth century regarding self-fashioning and the need to develop a clear identity. Women were excluded from this particular fashion. The nature of these jewels, in communicating clear affiliations and allegiances, made such an object unsuitable for a female. She would have supported first her father and then her husband in his causes and beliefs. Furthermore, her headdress was not suited to the wearing of such items. Previously considered as an elite and courtly jewel, the identification of a group of bronze plaquettes as hat ornaments has demonstrated clearly that the value of jewellery for men was immeasurable in monetary terms.

## Section 3

### Jewels and social networks

The previous section examined ornaments that were attached to a man's clothing. Although valuable and surprisingly portable, they merged into the garment as well, transforming it into a sparkling display. In this section, we move onto jewelled goods that were separate from clothing to explore in more detail how such items were used to reinforce social bonds and underscore notions of reciprocity in the Renaissance and early modern period. By examining the circulation patterns of jewels it is possible to determine the types of relationships that men cultivated. Furthermore, by revealing how these small-scale objects functioned within certain exchanges allows for a better understanding of how they sustained and supported varied meanings of masculinity within the early modern period.

Recent works on masculinity by historians such as Alexandra Shepard, Keith Botelho, and Amanda Bailey and Roze Hentschell have explored the possibilities of constructed masculinities that subverted traditional patriarchal forms of manhood.<sup>1</sup> Men played multiple roles in society and each role could place an individual within a new hierarchy, making him at once a subordinate, an equal, and a superior. Material culture contributed to the assertion of these roles, whether through the wearing of liveries or a badge of allegiance. Significantly, jewellery could highlight social networks and bonds through its giving and receiving. Peter Burke has shown the importance of a need for mutual understanding behind gift-giving, stating that it is impossible to be a giver without the existence of a receiver and conversely, that a receiver can only take on this role with the existence of a giver.<sup>2</sup> This circularity of gift-giving is expressed in the Proem to book 6 of Edmund Spenser's (1552?-1599) late sixteenth-century epic poem *The Faerie Queene*. In it the author lauds the virtue of his book, courtesy, in a fictive imagining of an exchange of gifts between him and Elizabeth I (r.1558-1603).

From your selfe I doe this vertue bring,  
And to your selfe doe it returne againe:  
So from the Ocean all riuers spring,  
And tribute backe repay as to their King.

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<sup>1</sup> Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Keith M. Botelho, *Renaissance Earwitnesses: Rumor and Early Modern Masculinity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Amanda Bailey and Roze Hentschell, eds., *Masculinity and the Metropolis of Vice, 1550-1650* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). See pp.22-23 above.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Burke, "Renaissance Jewels in Their Social Setting" in *Princely Magnificence: Court Jewels of the Renaissance, 1500-1630*, 8-11 (London: Debrett's Peerage Ltd, 1980), p.11. See also pp.32-33.

Right so from you all goodly vertues well  
Into the rest, which round about you ring,  
Faire Lords and Ladies, which about you dwell,  
And doe adorne your Court, where courtesies excell.<sup>3</sup>

The culture of gift-giving within the early modern period was constrained around need, whether a need for favours from the monarch, or a need for assistance or services from a retainer. Very often, though, the motivation behind the giving of jewels may have been less tangible. This chapter will explore these connections to show that networks, whether between men and women, between a group of men, or between a man and his ancestors and heirs, were created by objects which were valued for their intangible as well as their tangible value.

As we have seen men both owned and gave numerous types of jewelled objects from pearl earrings to diamond-encrusted swords. It would be impossible to cover all the categories involved, so this section focuses on what was probably the most important object type for reciprocal relationships: the ring. Because again the multiplicity of meanings is vast, I will explore the ring as used in the context of a betrothal or a wedding ceremony; rings given by newly created serjeants-at-law; the signet ring; and the mourning ring.

Of all items of jewellery, the ring is the most basic in its simplest form, comprising a hoop, shoulders, and a bezel. Yet through variations in style, inscription, and the context of giving and receiving, the ring has the ability to take on myriad meanings. By examining closely the forms of the various types of rings that are discussed within this section it is possible to understand better the use and context of a ring.

The first chapter assesses the role of the ring within the context of marriage. The importance of marriage for a man in this period is undeniable: the establishment of a household of which he would be head was a clear assertion of masculine achievement. Such a positioning within the community was only permissible through the forging of a close social bond with a woman. The use of a ring at the point of a marriage contraction was not a compulsory element of the ceremony. In fact, there was no codification relating to this institution. Nevertheless, the wedding ring visualised this union and remained the most potent and visible indicator that a marriage had been contracted. Documentary evidence from marriage depositions shows that very often claims were made to deny the legality of a marriage, with the ring's intention being called into question.

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<sup>3</sup> *The Fairie Queene*, 6.Proem.1 – *The Works of Edmund Spenser: A Variorum Edition*, ed. Edwin Greenlaw et al., 11 vols. (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1932-1957) cited in Patricia Fumerton, *Cultural Aesthetics: Renaissance Literature and the Practice of Social Ornament* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p.29.



The next chapter within this section focuses on homosocial relations by looking at a particular instance relating to the gifting of rings between men. This was the ritual giving of rings by those men admitted to the degree of serjeant-at-law. Certain recipients of these gold rings were dictated by custom and these adhered to a strict hierarchy that governed their weight, while the remainder of the rings were given freely by new serjeants to family members and friends. The following chapter then focuses on the signet ring and closes by returning to the idea of homosocial relations with a final examination of a group collectively known as the Gresham grasshopper rings. These are a set of signet rings of the foiled crystal variety and each is engraved to the reverse of its bezel with a grasshopper, the crest of the Gresham family. It is believed that each ring was given by the London merchant Sir Thomas Gresham (c.1518-1579) to certain men with whom he had dealings on a professional or personal level. The patterns of dispersal of the rings of the serjeants-at-law and the Gresham grasshopper rings reflect contemporary friendships and networks. They are also indicative of the types of male relationships that a man forged in his lifetime. The final chapter looks at relationships that men hoped to sustain after their lifetime through their bequests of mourning rings.

## Chapter 6

### ‘That tool of matrimony’: the ring in early modern betrothals and weddings



Figure 6.1: Gold and enamelled posy ring inscribed to the inside with the amorous motto ‘+PRENES + EN + GRE’, found in Wilberfoss, Yorkshire; England; sixteenth-seventeenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 2002,5-1.1 [Treasure ID: MME 432].

The French words engraved and hidden on the inside of this British Museum ring translate to ‘Accept this willingly’ and find their origin in the fifteenth century but the Roman capital script and lozenge-shaped decoration are more suggestive of a later date.<sup>1</sup> The rhetoric implies a mutual giving and receiving of the ring, which was an important factor in early modern betrothals and marriages. The significance of the motto is such then that it indicates this ring might have been a declaration of intent to marry. In this period marriage was a complex issue and the physicality of a ring was used to visualise this social bond. What was understood by a wedding ring is expressed effectively in the manuscript autobiography of the Elizabethan composer Thomas Whythorne (1528-1596).

The next day I went again to the widow [...] in words concerning marriage, she was far off and there was no promise to be had of her that way. Notwithstanding, she upon some talk desired me that I would get her a ring to be made; and she would deliver me some gold to make it withal. Unto the which I agreed quickly and demanded of her what fashion she would have it to be made. To the which she answered that she would have it after the manner of a wedding ring. I thereupon imagining that she meant some marriage, and that she would not have requested me to get the ring to be made on that fashion except I should be privy of the marriage, in hope to put the ring on her finger, seemed (as I was indeed) to be very glad that she would commit such a matter to be done by me.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See object catalogue record for the history of this motto, accessible on the British Museum’s Search the Collection online database.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Whythorne, *The Autobiography of Thomas Whythorne*, ed. by James M. Osborn (modern spelling edition) (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p.158.

Discovered in 1955 this text provides a fascinating insight into Tudor life from a male perspective. Both internal and external evidence suggest a probable dating of the manuscript, now held in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, to 1576.<sup>3</sup> The importance of this text for literary historians, scholars of music, and even researchers of gender studies soon becomes apparent through a reading of Whythorne's text. Yet this piece offers evidence of cultural practices and attitudes that is invaluable to the scope of this research. The passage cited above is but just one extract from the manuscript that captures the complexities and ambiguities regarding courtship and marriage in the early modern period. As a modern commentator has noted, 'Wedding was *the* male rite of passage' and the preoccupations of Whythorne in regards to this certainly support this statement.<sup>4</sup> The text also illuminates the role played by the ring in betrothal rituals and marriage ceremonies.

Extracts from Whythorne's autobiography and evidence from published marriage depositions will be presented to demonstrate that the ring, while not a compulsory component of the marriage ceremony, remained the clearest and most visible indicator of marriage. In this period under discussion, a ring was only given to the bride by her husband – a two-way exchange of rings does not seem to occur until the nineteenth century. So although this object type was worn by a woman, as is most often the case today, the man was responsible for its form and content. There are other contexts that involved the giving of a ring. For example, throughout the courtship process rings and other gifts were exchanged as love tokens. In William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* there are references to rings given by female characters to their male lovers.<sup>5</sup> Rings were also offered as signs of friendship, as was the case with the gold and carnelian ring presented to Desiderius Erasmus (1467-1536) in 1509 by Alexander Stewart (c.1493-1513), the illegitimate son of King James IV of Scotland (r.1488-1513) and later archbishop-designate of St Andrews (fig.6.2).<sup>6</sup> For the purposes of

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<sup>3</sup> In May 1577 Whythorne married a spinster named Elizabeth Stoughton of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. Given the nature of the text, with details of his amorous encounters divulged throughout, it is hard to imagine that Whythorne would purposely omit this defining moment in his life. One of the last events recorded in this book is the death of the Archbishop Parker, which occurred in 1575. This work was therefore written at some stage between these two events, and so a definitive year of 1576 has been given by the editor of this particular edition.

<sup>4</sup> John R. Gillis, *For Better, For Worse: British Marriages, 1600 to the Present* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p.76.

<sup>5</sup> See p.191 below.

<sup>6</sup> Correspondence from Erasmus to Willibald Pirckheimer dated 14 March 1525: 'Quum Senae discederem ab eo, detractum e digito tradidit <Accipe> inquires <pignus amicitiae nunquam inter nos intermoriturae>' cited in Lothar Schmitt, *Der Siegelring des Erasmus von Rotterdam: Auf den Spuren eines Rätsels der Renaissancezeit* (Basel: Historisches Museum Basel, 2009), note 5 p.50, also pp.9-11. For a translation see Desiderius Erasmus, *The Correspondence of Erasmus: Letters 1535 to 1657, January-December 1525*, vol.11, translated by Alexander Dalzell, annotated by Charles G. Nauert (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), p.66; John Rowlands, "Terminus, the Device of Erasmus of Rotterdam: A Painting by Holbein", *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 67, no. 2 (Feb., 1980): 50-54, fig.2.

this chapter only those rings used in the context of betrothals and marriages are under consideration.



Figure 6.2: Gold and carnelian signet ring belonging to Erasmus of Rotterdam, with the image of the god Terminus; beginning of sixteenth century (ring) and first century B.C. (gem). Historisches Museum Basel, inv. no. 1893.365.

In his late sixteenth-century work, *Arcadia*, the Elizabethan author and courtier Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586) describes marriage through the words of the character Euarchus.

Marriage being the most holy conjunction that falls to mankind, out of which all families and so consequently all societies do proceed, which not only by community of goods but community of children is to knit the minds in a most perfect union; which whoso breaks, dissolves all humanity, no man living free from the danger of so near a neighbour.<sup>7</sup>

This and other contemporary literature indicate that marriage was considered a fundamental state in early modern society yet, surprisingly, there were no codified norms dictating betrothal and marriage practices. In trying to understand these practices during the period in question, scholarship has often turned to marriage depositions.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, ed. Maurice Evans (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), pp.814-15.

<sup>8</sup> Between 1072 and 1076 William the Conqueror (1027/8-1087) issued an ordinance which discussed the jurisdiction of the English bishops. The subject is addressed in Colin Morris, "William I and the Church Courts", *The English Historical Review*, 82, no. 324 (Jul., 1967): 449-463. For the purpose of this thesis, the crucial element of this ordinance is that any matters relating to the enforcement of marriage was dealt with in the church courts and remained as such until the mid-nineteenth century – see B.J. Sokol and Mary Sokol, *Shakespeare, Law, and Marriage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p.18. For work that covers the Diocese of London (including the City of London, Middlesex, Essex, and parts of both Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire) during the period 1586 to 1611, see Loreen L. Giese, *Courtships, Marriage, Customs, and Shakespeare's Comedies* (New York & Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); for the Durham Consistory Court depositions from 1560 to 1630, see Peter Rushton, "The Testament of Gifts: Marriage Tokens and Disputed Contracts in North-East England, 1560-1630", *Folk Life*, 24, (1985-86): 25-31; for ecclesiastical court depositions from the diocese of Canterbury from 1542 to 1602, see Diana O'Hara, "The Language of Tokens and the Making of Marriage", *Rural History*, 3, no. 1 (April 1992): 1-40; see also Martin Ingram, "Spousals Litigation in the English Ecclesiastical Courts c.1350-c.1640" in *Marriage and Society: Studies in the*

These legal documents are indispensable tools since they illuminate contemporary perceptions associated with marriage and promises thereof. The underlying purpose of these records dictates language and form, while content is mostly centred on documenting actions and words that would assist in determining whether or not a marriage had in fact taken place. While it would be unfair to dismiss such accounts for being constrained by conventions, it is necessary to consider them within their legal framework and to remember that these are merely records of failed marriages.

The Whythorne text stands in stark contrast to these since it provides a personal and descriptive narrative. Nevertheless, it is important to retain perspective and remember that this is the autobiography of a self-professed gentleman looking perhaps to further his ambition at the Elizabethan court.<sup>9</sup> Interestingly, both this autobiography and the marriage depositions contain evidence of a common nature that illuminates courtship and marriage rituals and highlights contemporary anxieties. Furthermore, through these texts a modern reader is forced to reconsider somewhat anachronistic romantic notions of betrothal and marriage in the early modern period.

The Whythorne text is worth discussing in detail, for it reveals the subtleties attached to love tokens, in particular the ring. The passage cited at the start of this chapter brings this particular story between the protagonist and a young widow of 'worshipful parentage' to an interesting juncture. Up to this point, Whythorne has recounted how he has been introduced by a mutual friend to this widow. At five or six years his junior, childless, and with a dowry worth £20 a year she is considered to be a suitable choice. The negotiations that ensue are noted by Whythorne and the widow's changeable manner is evident throughout.<sup>10</sup> So when the widow asks Whythorne to have a ring made for her 'after the manner of a wedding ring', the author's immediate understanding is that her words indicate an agreement to marriage. The events that follow demonstrate how each party was acutely aware of their role within this negotiation. How typical these actions were, particularly those of the widow, is not clear but there is a definite sense of the investment that each has made to ensure that there is a semblance of balance of power.

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*Social History of Marriage*, edited by Outhwaite, 35-57 (New York, 1982) and Ralph Houlbrooke, "The Making of Marriage in Mid-Tudor England: Evidence from the Records of Matrimonial Contract Litigation", *Journal of Family History*, 10, (1985): 339-352.

<sup>9</sup> The frontispiece to the manuscript of Whythorne's biography reads: 'A book of songs and sonnets,/with long discourses set with/them, of the child's life, together/with a young man's life, and/entering into the old man's life./Devised and written with/a new orthography/by Thomas Whythorne, gent.'

<sup>10</sup> Whythorne, *Autobiography*, pp.152-57.

She went unto her chest and fetched out of it as much old gold as was worth nigh about a mark; the which she said that she would have bestowed in the ring. And then she, looking on certain rings that I wear on my little finger, seemed to like one of them and said that she would wear it a while for my sake; whereupon I offered to give it unto her, but she would not take it of gift.<sup>11</sup>

The widow's actions make an overt statement about contemporary understanding of betrothal and marriage practices. In her examination of the London Consistory Court depositions from 1586 to 1611, Giese argues that women were often not the passive recipients of gifts and that sometimes there 'included a calculation of the worth of the gifts sent by them or their suitors seemingly in order to quantify the extent of their obligation or relieve themselves of an obligation by indicating an equal exchange of goods'.<sup>12</sup> In the case of Thomas Wye versus Agnes Bushey, Katherine Freame recalls how Agnes sent a gift to Thomas on one occasion 'in recompence of some parte of his gyftes he had before tyme sent her, but nott in respecte of mariadage as this respondent verily thinketh'.<sup>13</sup> The use of the term 'in recompence' is significant. By equalling the monetary worth of the gifts she has received, Agnes has relieved herself of any financial obligation and therefore she is also free of any emotional ties.

In a similar manner, the widow provides Whythorne with the gold to make the ring, which signals that she considers the ring to be hers, with him merely acting as an agent. She takes his ring as a form of guarantee for the gold that she has supplied. But in refusing to accept Whythorne's ring as a gift she is ensuring that this is a purely financial transaction. For an acceptance of the ring as a gift would place her in his debt and possibly make her beholden to a promise of marriage.

While no gifts 'proved' consent in a legal sense, betrothal tokens were strong circumstantial evidence, for people recognized that such tokens were qualitatively different from mere courtship gifts. When such a ring was given and received there could be little doubt what was intended.<sup>14</sup>

Evidence from marriage depositions shows that the lines were somewhat blurred with regards to the meaning of the acceptance of a ring and often other reasons were cited for the gift. In the case of Juliane Marden versus Tusnothe, Marden claimed that the silver ring she

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<sup>11</sup> Whythorne, *Autobiography*, p.159.

<sup>12</sup> Giese, *Courtships*, p.86.

<sup>13</sup> DL/C/213/831, cited in Giese, *Courtships*, p.88.

<sup>14</sup> Eric Josef Carlson, *Marriage and the English Reformation* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), p.127.

received was in fact a New Year's gift and not a ring associated with marriage.<sup>15</sup> The shrewd behaviour of Whythorne's widow suggests that she wished to avoid her actions being misinterpreted. This is particularly important given that the exchanges between her and Whythorne took place within the context of a premise of marriage. Whythorne expresses his suspicion but nonetheless continues with the widow's request. He liaises with a goldsmith concerning the fashioning of the ring and an inscription that is to be engraved on its inner surface.

'The eye doth find, the heart doth choose, and love doth bind till death doth loose.' I do write this sentence in this sort because it is not of my making; yet so well liked of me as, if I should make another wedding ring, it should have the same sentence.<sup>16</sup>

The interactions with the goldsmith show Whythorne to have gained a more dominant role in the proceedings. For although he uses the widow's gold, Whythorne alone is responsible for instructing the goldsmith on the form of the ring. The widow offered no indication regarding its appearance other than it should be a 'wedding ring'. Unfortunately, it results that Whythorne has failed to commission a ring to the widow's liking. She bemoans the fact that it 'was not of the newest and best fashion', while Whythorne defends his choice claiming 'It is of the best fashion that I do know'.<sup>17</sup>

This encounter reveals that there was no prescribed form to the betrothal or wedding ring. While jewellery historians have often tried to categorise certain rings under the headings of marriage or betrothal, it is important to consider the words of Charles Oman in his catalogue of rings in the Victoria and Albert Museum that 'it is the use and not the shape which distinguishes the wedding and betrothal ring'.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, it is the context of marriage (interpreted as such by both parties) that transforms a ring into a wedding ring. However, by considering the demand made by Whythorne's widow when she asks of him to have made for her a ring 'after the manner of a wedding ring', it needs to be acknowledged that perhaps there was some contemporary understanding regarding the form of a wedding ring that remains inaccessible to a modern reader. Oman is correct in his judgement that the use of a ring dictated whether it was a marriage ring, but Whythorne's statement regarding fashion suggests that certain conventions may have governed this object type.

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<sup>15</sup> Tusnothe v. Marden, (1565), MS.X.10.12, ff.182r-v, Canterbury Cathedral Archives and Library, Canterbury cited in O'Hara, "The Language of Tokens", p.21.

<sup>16</sup> Whythorne, *Autobiography*, pp.159-60. The source of this motto remains unknown.

<sup>17</sup> Whythorne, *Autobiography*, p.160.

<sup>18</sup> Charles Oman, *Catalogue of Rings in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1930; reprint, Ipswich: Anglia Publishing, 1993), vi.

It is certainly true that there are particular motifs such as clasped hands (the *fede* symbol), a pierced heart, and the pansy, amongst others, that could signify love and affection but these are by no means definitive indicators that a ring was used in a marriage ceremony.<sup>19</sup> There is only one category of ring that can be identified clearly for use during a wedding ceremony and that is the Jewish wedding ring. The British Museum's collection contains twenty-seven rings belonging to this object type, most often identifiable from the broad band; ornate filigree and boss embellishments to the hoop, often decorated with enamel; and a bezel formed by a gable, thought to symbolise either the Temple of Jerusalem or the new home of the couple (fig.6.3).



Figure 6.3: Gold and enamelled Jewish wedding-ring inscribed 'Mazzal tob' (Good luck); sixteenth century; German. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe AF.1417.

Jewish wedding rings of this type seem to have appeared in the fourteenth century and their use continued into the nineteenth century. They were traditionally only used at the wedding ceremony, since size and complexity made them impractical for everyday wear. Being associated with ritual, such rings were often retained by the family as an heirloom or may have been the property of the synagogue, and therefore were not considered personal

<sup>19</sup> *Le Grand Frisson* was an exhibition held at Chaumet, Paris in 2008 which brought together jewellery spanning five hundred years to the present day to explore the theme of love. Many of the objects included were from private collections and all demonstrate a broad range of love motifs used on jewellery – see Diana Scarisbrick, *Le Grand Frisson: 500 Years of Jewels of Sentiment* (Paris: Textuel, 2008). See also Andrea Bayer, ed., *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy* (New York, New Haven & London: Metropolitan Museum of Art & Yale University Press, 2008).



jewels.<sup>20</sup> Considering this and that this type of ring is specific to a marginalised and itinerant religious group, and therefore not indicative of the practices of early modern society at large, the Jewish wedding ring will not be considered in this chapter. The focus of this chapter will be English practices and therefore English rings, though a notable continental example should be mentioned in this discussion of the wedding ring. This fifteenth-century, northern Italian gold ring set with a faceted diamond in the bezel is inscribed in black letter script on the shoulders of the hoop ‘Lorenzo\* aLenaLena’ (fig.6.4).



Figure 6.4: Gold, enamelled and diamond ring inscribed ‘Lorenzo\* aLenaLena’; fifteenth century; Italian. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe AF.1090.

Luke Syson and Dora Thornton believe this ring to be a marriage ring from a groom to his bride, since the abbreviated form of Elena or Madalena used in the inscription to indicate the woman’s name is suggestive of intimacy.<sup>21</sup> The use of a diamond strengthens this supposition, since this precious stone was considered a symbol of marital fidelity.<sup>22</sup>

Returning to the question of the agency that Whythorne had in determining the form of the ring, we need to examine the inscription selected to be engraved on the inner surface of the ring in question. Although the author admits that the posy he has selected is not of his own composition, nevertheless it is his poetic sentiment that is expressed to the widow and to be worn by her.<sup>23</sup> A contemporary parallel that also demonstrates the man selecting the motto to be worn by his bride is evident with regards to the wedding ring given by Edward Seymour (1539?-1621), earl of Hertford to Lady Katherine Grey (1540?-1568). Despite both parties being willing participants, this marriage was subject to an inquiry over its legitimacy on the

<sup>20</sup> Diana Scarisbrick, *Rings: Jewelry of Power, Love and Loyalty* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2007), pp.112-13; Bayer, ed., *Art and Love*, p.102; Christine Descatoire, ed., *Treasures of the Black Death* (London: The Wallace Collection, 2009), pp.60-63.

<sup>21</sup> Luke Syson and Dora Thornton, *Objects of Virtue: Art in Renaissance Italy* (London: British Museum Press, 2001), p.65.

<sup>22</sup> Bayer, ed., *Art and Love*, p.100. See p.203-04 for a thirteenth-century view of the virtues of diamonds.

<sup>23</sup> This posy is recorded by Joan Evans as being in a manuscript at Sion College – Joan Evans, *English Posies and Posy Rings* (London, 1931), p.34.

orders of Queen Elizabeth I (r.1558-1603). Surviving documents reveal the various stages of negotiations, the betrothal, and the wedding itself, with one section explaining how the ring came into being.

And concerninge the Wedding Ringe he saieth that a lyttle before the saied Marriadge he caused a Ringe of Golde to be made of fower or fyve lincks wrytten uppon everie linck with certain English Miter of his owne makinge conteynyn matter of good Will.<sup>24</sup>

The sentiment expressed on the ring was 'of his owne makinge' and Lady Katherine had no agency in this. In fact, during the part of her interrogation when she discusses the receiving of the ring, she claims that 'whether it weare made for that purpose or not shee cannott tell'.<sup>25</sup>

In the Whythorne text cited above there is another stark reminder of how love and courtship in the early modern period operated under different parameters than those of the modern day when the author states that should he marry again he would choose the same posy for a ring. This suggests that there was no desire to create a sentiment that was personal to his potential wife, but rather that this sentence was merely his own expression of commitment.

The tale ends with the widow's resolution that she will not marry Whythorne, though not before he has been recommended by his friend to give her a ring in the presence of others.

Seeing that she is so tickle and fleeting I do think it meet that ye be ensured together before her brother and me, and that you do give her a ring on that condition.<sup>26</sup>

In the context of the negotiations that have taken place prior to this and by the giving of a ring in front of witnesses, there is an underlying acceptance by the male characters that a legitimate marriage will have been contracted. However, a further refusal by the widow convinces Whythorne to cease his pursuit. Almost immediately his thoughts turn to the investments that he has made in this relationship thus far and he seeks to sever the ties that exist between him and the widow, as a result of the possession of certain objects exchanged during the courtship period.

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<sup>24</sup> "Commission of Inquiry of the Marriage of Lady Katherine Grey to Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford", 12 September 1561, British Library, Harley MS 6286, f.46v: from the Earl of Hertford's examination at the Tower of London undertaken by William Marquis of Winchester, Sir Richard Sackville, Sir Edward Warner and William Rosewell.

<sup>25</sup> "Commission of Inquiry", Harley MS 6286, f.48r: from the examination of Lady Katherine Grey's examination at the Tower of London, undertaken by the same four that conducted the Earl's interrogation.

<sup>26</sup> Whythorne, *Autobiography*, p.162.

I remembered that I had as yet the widow's ring, and that she had mine. Of the which I thought to have made an exchange with her [...] quoth I, 'here I have brought you your ring; and if you will pay me for the making thereof and will also redeliver unto me the tokens which ye received of me, you shall have your ring.' Immediately after my words so spoken, she paid me the money for the making of the ring and delivered me my tokens again. Upon the receipt whereof I delivered her her ring.<sup>27</sup>

The returning of gifts was a visible declaration marking the end of a relationship, and should this not take place infidelity could be claimed if either party began courting with another.<sup>28</sup> The importance of the retention of gifts and the confusion that could arise by a third party taking possession of a gift is evident in a number of contemporary plays. In Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* Nerissa becomes upset that Gratiano no longer possesses the ring she gave him, which is inscribed 'LOVE ME, AND LEAVE ME NOT':

What talke you of the posie or the valed:  
You swore to me when I did give you,  
that you would weare it till your houre of death,  
and that it should lie with you in your graue.<sup>29</sup>

Later in the same play a similar sentiment of retention is manifest: 'I gaue my Loue a ring, and made him sweare/neuer to part with it'.<sup>30</sup> In the play *Cymbeline* an exchange of a ring and a manacle between Innogen and Posthumus becomes symbolic of a marital bond. The character Iachino later takes possession of the manacle from Innogen and spies her mole surreptitiously, in order to prove to Posthumus that he has slept with Innogen and so win a wager. It is not the knowledge of the mole that troubles Posthumus but rather the sight of the manacle in Iachino's possession that compels Posthumus to believe the tale of infidelity.<sup>31</sup>

Whythorne was acutely aware of the significance of the returned gift, as is demonstrated in an earlier part of the story. Five days following the first encounter between Whythorne and the widow, he meets with her to confirm that she is still in agreement with the marriage.

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<sup>27</sup> Whythorne, *Autobiography*, p.164.

<sup>28</sup> Gillis, *British Marriages*, p.33.

<sup>29</sup> William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice. 1600 (Hayes Quarto)*, edited by W. W. Greg, Shakespeare Quarto Facsimiles (London: The Shakespeare Association & Sidgwick and Jackson Limited, 1939), Act 5, Scene I, Lines 151-54.

<sup>30</sup> Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice*, lines 170-71.

<sup>31</sup> Valerie Wayne, "The Woman's Parts of *Cymbeline*" in *Staged Properties in Early Modern English Drama*, edited by Jonathan Gil Harris and Natasha Korda, 288-315 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp.289-94.

Whereunto she said that such a promise she made unto him and was willing to perform it. Upon the which words I gave unto her a token of good will and she received it.<sup>32</sup>

It later ensues that the widow changes her mind, reasoning that ‘The which promise was no such contract but that it may be broken again’.<sup>33</sup> Following a further discussion regarding her change of heart, Whythorne recalls that ‘she fetched the token which the two days before I had given unto her. And she would have delivered it unto me again, but I would not then receive it’.<sup>34</sup> By his refusal of the return of this token, there is a clear sense that Whythorne believes that her possession of the token implies a commitment and obligation on her part.

Throughout the whole exchange between Whythorne and the widow, one question that seems to dominate for a modern reader is why Whythorne persists in his pursuit of marriage when the widow’s temperament seems so changeable. A contemporary view of marriage expressed by the English clergyman William Gouge (1575-1653) in his 1622 publication *Of Domesticall Duties* indicates the importance of marriage for both men and women in the early modern period. In an enumeration of the privileges of marriage, Gouge writes that:

1. By it men and women are made Husbands and Wives.
2. It is the only lawfull meanes to make them Fathers and Mothers.
3. It is the ordinarie meanes to make them Masters and Mistresses. [...]
4. It is the most effectuall meanes of continuing a mans name and memory in this world, that can be. Children are liuing monuments and liuely representations of their parents.
5. Many priuileges haue of old beene granted to such as were married. In pleading causes, or giuing sentence, they had the first place; and in choice of offices they were preferred. In meetings they had the vpper hand.<sup>35</sup>

The observations of the modern commentator John Gillis, in his 1988 publication charting British marriage from the start of the seventeenth century to the present day, shed further light on Whythorne’s continuous pursuit of marriage. He observes that in terms of the social implications behind marriage in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, ‘Wedding was *the* male rite of passage’.<sup>36</sup> Whythorne even muses on the subject at one point and says ‘I

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<sup>32</sup> Whythorne, *Autobiography*, p.152.

<sup>33</sup> Whythorne, *Autobiography*, p.153.

<sup>34</sup> Whythorne, *Autobiography*, p.153.

<sup>35</sup> William Gouge, *Of Domesticall Duties Eight Treatises* (London: William Bladen, 1622), pp.210-11.

<sup>36</sup> Gillis, *British Marriages*, p.76.

hoped to become a married man, with the rest of that holy estate'.<sup>37</sup> This is an important point to consider, particularly in the context of the literature on the subject of marriage that looks to the role and the changing status of the woman. Gillis is quite correct in his assertion that 'a woman was a dependent whether a daughter or a wife'.<sup>38</sup> By the acceptance of a ring during a marriage ceremony, the woman remained as a subordinate and it was the man's status that was transformed. Moreover, through this ceremonial movement the ring itself is transformed and becomes a wedding ring and hence symbolic of the union.

The widow in the Whythorne text is in a strong position, since she is not considered as an unmarried woman. For despite being a widow, she is dowered and therefore has her place in society. For Whythorne, however, marriage would permit him to establish a separate household. With marriage firmly linked to this idea of the creation of a new family unit comes the necessity to be able to sustain it. For a man of the lower class, he would need to wait until he had land that he could work and would therefore marry in his late twenties. The story was similar for men of the artisan class too, 'for it was not until a man was a guild member that marriage was even conceivable'. Indeed, in sixteenth-century London marriage and the achievement of freeman status were closely tied.<sup>39</sup> Resulting from the lengthy seven-year apprenticeship system in London, becoming a freeman only usually occurred at about the age of twenty-six, with 'marriage, setting up a household, and other events in the transition to adulthood' being deferred until this stage.<sup>40</sup> It was not usually until about two years later that a man was in a position to establish a household and subsequently marry, since he needed to first work as a journeyman to then become financially independent.<sup>41</sup> Whether able to truly afford to maintain a household though, the semblance of this ability was paramount and Whythorne dresses conspicuously to convey this, once he has decided to find a wife.

And, upon that resolution, after I had furnished myself with convenient apparel and jewels so well as I could (with the glorious show of the which, among other thing, a young maiden must be wooed), I took on me this aforesaid conquest and enterprise.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Whythorne, *Autobiography*, p.63.

<sup>38</sup> Gillis, *British Marriages*, p.75.

<sup>39</sup> Gillis, *British Marriages*, p.13.

<sup>40</sup> Steve Rappaport, *Worlds within Worlds: Structures of Life in Sixteenth-Century London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p.49.

<sup>41</sup> Rappaport, *Worlds*, p.327.

<sup>42</sup> Whythorne, *Autobiography*, p.63.

The selected extracts from Whythorne's autobiography presented here reveal the complexities of courtship, betrothal, and marriage in the early modern period. Evidence from contemporary marriage depositions published in numerous studies provides similar accounts and further promotes a sense of ambiguity with regards to what constituted a valid marriage in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The only certainty concerning marriage is that there is no clearly defined process in this period. This is somewhat strange considering the importance placed on being in the state of marriage. For as Gillis points out 'marriage was the central economic and social institution' during the early modern period.<sup>43</sup>

### 6.1 The form of marriage

*A Treatise of Spousals, or Matrimonial Contracts* is the only contemporary treatise that deals with the issue of marriage. Posthumously printed, this tract was written in the seventeenth century by Henry Swinburne (c.1551-1624), a judge of the Prerogative Court in York.<sup>44</sup> For Swinburne the single most important element that constituted a marriage was the mutual consent of both parties (otherwise known as spousals) in the presence of a witness. This consent could take the form of words, writing, signs, or tokens. Common to the depositions are various forms of testimony that could uphold the legality of a marriage, much of which was still subject to interpretation. These included the exchange of letters, tokens, or rings; talking together; eating and drinking together; kissing and embracing; and the joining of hands.<sup>45</sup> Mutual consent remained the ultimate indicator, though this alone was not sufficient, for there needed to be a witness to the event.

The marriage between Lady Katherine and Hertford in 1561 was deemed void by the Commission of Inquiry that was established to determine its validity. Despite the extensive and corroborative statements provided by both Lady Katherine and Hertford, in addition to their mutual consent, they were unable to produce the single witness present at the event, the priest who married them. It seems that even the production of the wedding ring did not constitute proof of a legal marriage. The priest was eventually presented as a witness, though much too late for Lady Katherine who died in 1567, and the marriage was finally established in 1606.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Gillis, *British Marriages*, p.54.

<sup>44</sup> Henry Swinburne, *A Treatise of Spousals, or Matrimonial Contracts* (London, 1686 posthumously published).

<sup>45</sup> Giese, *Courtships* and O'Hara, "The Language of Tokens".

<sup>46</sup> For a copy of the Commission of Inquiry, see British Library, Harley MS 6286; the original document is a barely legible manuscript in the National Archives, SP 46/10. For the establishment of the marriage in 1606, see Brydges's Edition of Collins's Peerage, vol. i, p.173, cited in Henry Ellis, *Original Letters Illustrative of English History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> series, first published in London 1827 (London: Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1969), vol.2, p.290.

Despite contrary belief, this practice of mutual consent was not limited to England. This doctrine of consent actually dated from the late-twelfth century following a failed attempt by Pope Alexander III (c.1100/05-1181) to enforce the need for a church ceremony to validate a marriage. Roman law did offer rituals for the marriage ceremony, though this was not compulsory and mutual consent alone was sufficient.<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless, there are notable accounts that document the various rituals practised by certain social groups, such as Marco Antonio Altieri's *Li nuptiali* that comments on the practices of fifteenth-century Roman aristocracy.<sup>48</sup> Of particular interest is the ring day (*anellamento*), since it focused on the ritual placing of the ring on the woman's finger by the man, thus elevating the status and significance of the ring.<sup>49</sup>

The Catholic Church found itself unable to reform the marriage ceremony since 'there was no scriptural warrant for a requirement of ceremony, banns, endowment or parental consent for a valid marriage' and so marriage by consent remained fully legal.<sup>50</sup> Therefore solemnizing a marriage in church was not a requisite, though it was encouraged in order to provide concrete evidence of marriage. Elizabeth Chadbourne rejected the receiving of a gold ring as proof of a marriage between Thomas Powell and Katherine Garnett alias Armsted, for she asked 'if she weare married indede' and 'if she weare married in ... the Churche'.<sup>51</sup>

Marriage in church did not become legally enforced until the Hardwicke Act of Marriage of 1753, which ended the practice of mutual consent as was permitted by canon law. The idea of a civil marriage was introduced during the Civil War with a Commonwealth Statute of 24 August 1653, though this was repealed on 26 June 1657 and only reintroduced in 1836.<sup>52</sup> While in Catholic Europe after the twenty-fourth session of the Council of Trent in 1563 a marriage could not be upheld to be valid unless it was presided over by a priest in the presence of two or three witnesses.<sup>53</sup> Therefore with no legal requirement for a church

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Lord Beauchamp's 1604 appeal against the sentence of the Commission is in British Library, Cottonian MS Vitellius C.XVI, ff.412, 458, 516, and 522. Sir Julius Caesar's notes of the reversal of the sentence can be found in British Library, Lansdowne MS 732.

<sup>47</sup> Sokol and Sokol, *Shakespeare*, pp.74-75.

<sup>48</sup> Marco Antonio Altieri, *Li Nuptiali Di Marco Antonio Altieri*, edited by Enrico Narducci and A. Modigliani (Roma: Roma nel Rinascimento, 1995).

<sup>49</sup> Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, "Zacharias, or the Ousted Father: Nuptial Rites in Tuscany between Giotto and the Council of Trent" in *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, 178-212 (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1985), pp.181-87.

<sup>50</sup> Carlson, *Marriage*, p.24.

<sup>51</sup> DL/C/216/234v; DL/C/216/251; and DL/C/216/293r cited in Giese, *Courtships*, pp.138-39.

<sup>52</sup> Gillis, *British Marriages*, pp.85, 104-05; Sokol and Sokol, *Shakespeare*, p.75.

<sup>53</sup> Edward Westermarck, *A Short History of Marriage* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1926), p.225; and H.J. Schroeder, *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, p.183 cited in Giese, *Courtships*, p.156.

ceremony in the early modern period, marriages could be conducted informally and so the need to demonstrate one's consent clearly was paramount.

## 6.2 Marriage and rings

While 'no one Form of Desponsation [was] more lawful than another' Swinburne considered the ring to constitute the clearest and most tangible sign of this mutual consent to contract spousals or matrimony, provided the occasion for giving and receiving was explicit.<sup>54</sup>

If any words were uttered, the delivery and acceptance of the Ring is no more but a Confirmation of such a contract as those words do import [...] If in earnest, then the manner of delivery and acceptance thereof, is to be regarded; for if it were not delivered in a solemn manner (as if he did not put it on her fourth Finger, but gave it her otherwise into her hands) it doth not signifie Matrimony, no more than when a Man sendeth a Ring to a Woman by a Messenger, which is understood to be a Gift or Token of good will, and not a sign of Matrimony or Spousals. And albeit by the Opinion of some it may seem, that the Ring being delivered by the Party himself into the Womans hand, without putting the same on her Finger, Spousals are thereby presumed to be contracted betwixt them; yet dare not I deliver this Conclusion for current, as well because in this Case, it seemeth rather a Gift or an Argument of friendly good will, than an earnest penny of Spousals: As also, for that by this means, as by a Bait, many simple Maids might easily be hooked, e're they were advised, and so contracted before they consented; a matter no less unreasonable than unlawful.<sup>55</sup>

Although the ring was considered an indicator and the act of placing it on the woman's finger by the man was symbolic of the mutual consent of both parties, it was by no means necessary for contracting the marriage. It would also seem that the ring did not need to have any intrinsic value. Therefore, it is merely a sign of marriage and not a requisite thereof. Yet in his examinations of depositions, Houlbrooke claims that 'No other sort of gift was so closely associated with marriage in the eyes of the law'.<sup>56</sup>

In the case of Richard Thompson versus Helen Butt, John Sharp recalls in his deposition the events following the minister asking Richard for a ring.

Thompson answered that hee had none, and theareupon the other man whom ... [he] supposeth to be an hostelier stooped down and made a ring of rush and would have given it them but they took not the same for the stranger tolld them it mattered not for any ring.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Swinburne, *Treatise*, p.7.

<sup>55</sup> Swinburne, *Treatise*, pp.209-10.

<sup>56</sup> Houlbrooke, "The Making of Marriage", p.344

<sup>57</sup> DL/C/214/118, cited in Giese, *Courtships*, p.139



That the use of rush was perhaps not such an unusual substitute for a ring can be supported by a literary reference found in Robert Greene's *Menaphon*, first published in 1589. Following an exchange between the pair of poor country lovers Doron and Carmela, the author interrupts the narrative to address the gentlemen of the dedication.

Well, 'twas a good world when such simplicity was used, says the old women of our time, when a ring of rush would tie as much love together as a gimmon of gold.<sup>58</sup>

Despite the sometimes peripheral role played by the ring in marriage depositions, it does constitute a fundamental part of the marriage ceremony as instructed by the Book of Common Prayer that was introduced in 1549, during the reign of Edward VI (r.1547-1553).

Then shall they again loose theyr handes, & the man shal geve unto the woma[n] a ring, laying the same upo[n] the booke, with the accustomed dutie to the Priest and Clarke. And the Priest taking the ryng, shal delyver it unto the ma[n], to put it upon the fourth finger of the woma[n]s left ha[n]d. And the ma[n] taught by the Priest, shal say.

With this ring I thee wed [...]

[...] So these persons may surely performe and kepe the vowe and couenaunt betwixte them made, wherof this ryng geven, and received, is a token & pledge, and euer remain in perfect loue & peace together, and liue according unto thy lawes [...]

For asmuche as R. and R. have co[n]sented together in holy wedlocke, and haue witnessed the same before God, and thys company, and therto haue geven and pledged their trouth eyther to other, & haue declared the same by geuyng and receiuyng of a ryng, & by ioynynge of handes I pronounce that thei be man and wife together.<sup>59</sup>

In the First Book of Common Prayer not only is the presence and significance of the ring notable for the role it plays in contracting the marriage, but the positioning of it is also prescribed.

This is the first instance of the ring to be placed on the fourth finger of the left hand, for prior to this it had been placed on the right hand. An ancient text of the grammarian Aulus Gellius (c.125-after 180 AD) suggested that a vein flowed directly from this finger to the

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<sup>58</sup> Robert Greene, *Menaphon. Camilla's Alarm to Slumbering Euphues in his melancholy cell at Silvedra*, ed. by Brenda Carter (Ottawa: Dovehouse Editions, 1996), p.170. A 'gimmon of gold' refers to a gimmel ring, which was usually made of two conjoined hoops that when made as one completed the form of the ring, and when separate often revealed otherwise hidden messages.

<sup>59</sup> *The Book of Common Prayer Commonly Called the First Book of Queen Elizabeth*, printed by Grafton, 1559 (London: William Pickering, 1844), ff.97r-v.

heart. It seems that over time this was misinterpreted to be the right hand. So with the introduction of the Book of Common Prayer, this mistake was corrected.<sup>60</sup> Roman Catholics on the Continent adopted this practice in 1614 in their religious book, the *Rituale Romanum*, but recusants were defiant and continued to wear a wedding ring on the right hand until the eighteenth century. In a section entitled 'A Challenge against Protestants' the author John Rastell mentions this discrepancy in the Protestant and Catholic traditions between the hand on which to place the woman's ring.

18. Or that the man should put the wedding ring vpon the fourth finger of the left hand of the woman, and not of the right hand of her, as it hath ben many hundred years continued.<sup>61</sup>

There were also challenges to the use of the ring and in fact during the Commonwealth the ring in the marriage ceremony was abolished, since it was seen to have 'heathenish origins' from its association with bishops' rings.<sup>62</sup>

Others were for Abolishing  
That Tool of Matrimony, a Ring,  
With which th' unsanctifi'd Bridegroom  
Is marry'd onley to a thumb.<sup>63</sup>

The seventeenth-century satirical text *Hudibras* by the poet Samuel Butler (bap.1613; d.1680) offers a commentary of an earlier period. This section of the text is illuminating for the insignificance it assigns to the validity of the ring used in marriage. Furthermore, it provides interesting reference to the practice of wearing a wedding ring on the thumb. A painting once housed at Stanford Court in Worcestershire supposedly showed five Elizabethan ladies of the Salway family demonstrating this practice.<sup>64</sup> Unfortunately, a fire in 1882 destroyed much of the original house along with the collections of manuscripts and

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<sup>60</sup> 'There is a Vein of Blood which passeth from that fourth Finger unto the Heart, called *vena amoris*, Loves Vein' – Swinburne, *Treatise*, p.208.

<sup>61</sup> John Rastell, *A confutation of a sermon, pronou[n]ced by M. Iuell, at Paules crosse, the second Sondaie before Easter (which Catholikes doe call Passion Sondaie) Anno D[omi]ni. M.D.LX. By Iohn Rastell M. Of Art, and student in diuinitie* (1564), p.163.

<sup>62</sup> William Jones, *Finger-Ring Lore: Historical, Legendary, Anecdotal* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1877), p.289.

<sup>63</sup> Samuel Butler, "Hudibras. The Third and Last Part" in *Hudibras. In Three Parts* (London: Printed by W. Rogers, 1684), Part III, Canto II, p.100.

<sup>64</sup> Jones, *Finger-Ring Lore*, p.289, note 1.

paintings.<sup>65</sup> Portraiture does offer evidence for the wearing of rings on the thumb but without further research it would be impossible to say definitively that the ring had been used in a marriage ceremony.<sup>66</sup>

Despite the prominence given to the ring by Swinburne and the role that it plays within the solemnization of marriage ceremony in the Book of Common Prayer, there is still no prescription of form. Oman's assertion that function was the main concern when determining a wedding or betrothal ring can be supported by evidence found in marriage depositions. While references to a plain gold hoop are most common, this was by no means the only type of ring given to the woman. Giese has identified *memento mori* and signet rings in the London Consistory Court records, as well as 'a gowld ring inamuled' and 'a ringe of gold with a Dyamond in'.<sup>67</sup> That the type of ring used as a wedding ring could not be determined even by contemporaries is evident in an exchange between Lady Katherine Grey and Sir Owen as the former lay on her death-bed, a prisoner in the Tower of London, on 27 January 1567.

Then she said vnto Sir owene I shal further desire *you* to deliuer from me certene Com[m]endationes, and tokens vnto my Lorde, & calling vnto her woman she said give me the boxe wherin my weddinge Ringe is, and when she had it she opened it, and tooke oute a Ringe with a pointed diamond in it and said here Sir owene delyuer this vnto my Lorde, this is the Ringe that I receaued of him when I gaue my selfe vnto him, and gaue him my faith, what saye you madam said Sir Owen was this *your* wedinge Ringe, No Sir Owene she said, this was the Ringe of my assurance vnto my Lord, and ther is my weddinge ringe takynge an other Ringe all of goulde out of the boxe, sainge delyuer this also vnto my Lorde.<sup>68</sup>

Sir Owen's initial perception is that the wedding ring is the hoop set with a point-cut diamond. Lady Katherine corrects him and informs him that this particular ring was actually used on the occasion on which they were betrothed. The wedding ring in this instance takes on a more simple form being made of plain gold. This contradicts the idea proposed by Diana

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<sup>65</sup> 'Parishes: Stanford on Teme', *A History of the County of Worcester: volume 4* (1924), pp. 341-345. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=42907> Date accessed: 04 November 2009.

<sup>66</sup> The following portraits show women wearing a ring on the thumb and all are illustrated in George Frederick Kunz, *Rings for the Finger* (Philadelphia & London: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1917): Unknown woman, by Juan Pantoja de la Cruz (Museo del Prado, Madrid); Anne of Cleves (1515-1557), by Hans Holbein (Musée du Louvre, Paris); Judith, after Lucas Cranach (Kaiserliche Gemälde-Galerie, Vienna); Clara Eugenia, daughter of Philip II of Spain, by Gonzales (Museo del Prado, Madrid); and Catarina Michela, daughter of Philip II of Spain, by Coello Sanchez (Museo del Prado, Madrid).

<sup>67</sup> DL/C/218/122 and DL/C/219/313v cited in Giese, *Courtships*, p.140.

<sup>68</sup> "A breefe Discourse of the speech & manner of *the* Departing out of this Life of the Lady Katherine wife to the Earle of Hertford, & Daughter to Henry: Gray: Duke of Suffolk then she being prisoner in the Towre *the* 27 of January 1567", British Library, Harley MS 39, ff.373r-374v.

Scarisbrick that all who could afford to do so chose to marry with a gem-set ring. She argues that a simple gold or silver-gilt hoop was only for those that were less wealthy.<sup>69</sup> Lady Katherine's wedding ring was actually formed of five interlinking gold hoops and on four of these the following words were engraved:

As Circles Five by art compact shewe but one ringe in sight  
So trust uniteth faithfull minds, with knott of secrete might  
Whose force to breake but greedie death noe right possesseth power  
As tyme and sequels well shall prove my Ringe can saie noe more.<sup>70</sup>

That this is a complex ring is undeniable, but nonetheless it remains a ring made only of gold.<sup>71</sup> In a late seventeenth-century comedy written by William Cavendish (bap.1593; d.1676), first duke of Newcastle, the character of Sir Richard Huntlove lauds the benefits of going to the country to his lady. He tells her that she will 'not be asham'd to weare youre owne wedding ring with the old posie'.<sup>72</sup> This would seem to indicate a plain gold hoop with an inscription engraved on the inner face. Even on the occasion of marriage between Queen Mary I (r.1553-1558) and Philip II of Spain (1527-1598) in 1554 there was discussion in the Council of the form of ring with which Mary should be married. Eventually, Mary decided not to have a gem-set ring, 'for she chose to be wedded with a plain hoop of gold, like other maidens'.<sup>73</sup> There is no doubt that a gem-set ring could have been afforded on this occasion but a choice of a gold ring in its simplest and purest form suggests a desire for a pure and wholesome marriage.<sup>74</sup>

### 6.3 Gimmel rings and posy rings

Despite there being no standardised form to the wedding ring, there were certain types that remained popular during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The gimmel ring is perhaps a type most often associated with love and marriage. The name derives from the Latin *gemellus*, meaning twin. This type of ring is usually comprised of two intertwined hoops each

<sup>69</sup> Scarisbrick, *Rings* (2007), p.81.

<sup>70</sup> British Library, Harley MS 6286, f.44r; National Archives, SP 46/10, f.24r; also cited in Ellis, *Original Letters*, p.290; and Jones, *Finger-Ring Lore*, p.412.

<sup>71</sup> A similar ring, formed of six flat gold hoops, was discovered in the tomb of Count Palatine Friedrich (1557-1597). It is now in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum inv. no. T4231 – see *Princely Magnificence: Court Jewels of the Renaissance, 1500-1630* (London: Debrett's Peerage Ltd, 1980), cat. no. 75d.

<sup>72</sup> British Library, Harley MS 7650, f.5r; also published as William Cavendish (Earl of Newcastle), *The Country Captain* (1641) (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the Malone Society, 1999), lines 153-55.

<sup>73</sup> Jones, *Finger-Ring Lore*, p.295.

<sup>74</sup> For a reference to 'a playne hope like a wedding ryng' see David Starkey, ed., *The Inventory of King Henry VIII. Society of Antiquaries MS 129 and British Library MS Harley 1419. Volume I: The Transcript* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers for Society of Antiquaries London, 1998), no.3214.

with their own inscription or stone and therefore forming half a ring, that when joined make the ring complete.<sup>75</sup>

A notable example is the supposed wedding ring of the London merchant Sir Thomas Gresham (1519-1579), possibly depicted on the finger of Gresham in a full-length portrait and exhibited in a London exhibition in 1933.<sup>76</sup> Both hoops contain Biblical invocations, with one containing the words 'QVOD DEVS CONIVNSIT' (What God has joined together), and the other bears 'HOMO NON SEPERAT' (Let no man separate); one hoop is set with a ruby stone, and the other is set with a diamond. When joined, the stones unite and the words are concealed. A cavity in the ring at one time held two gold figurines of loves or genii.<sup>77</sup> A contemporary German example with the same inscriptions as the Gresham ring, set with a ruby and an aquamarine and similarly decorated with elaborate scrollwork and enamelling, is in the British Museum's collection (fig.6.5).<sup>78</sup>



Figure 6.5: Gold and enamelled gimmel ring formed of two interlocking hoops, the bezel set with a ruby and an aquamarine and in the shape of a quatrefoil flower with scrollwork decoration, inscribed 'QVOD DEVS CONIVNSIT HOMO NON SEPERAT'; sixteenth century; German. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe, AF.1097.

This ring type was popular in the fifteenth century and in the following century it became more elaborate, with sculptural detailing to the hoop and shoulders, and chasing and enamelling to the sides of the quatrefoil bezel. Traditionally the two hoops of a gimmel ring were able to be parted and, when a couple was betrothed, each party received one part. At the

<sup>75</sup> Gimmel rings formed of more than two hoops are more commonly referred to as puzzle rings.

<sup>76</sup> "A Loan Exhibition Depicting the Reign of Queen Elizabeth", edited by SW1 22 & 23 Grosvenor Place (London: In aid of the Young Women's Christian Association. Patron: HM the Queen, 1933), no.503. The portrait is in the collection of the Mercers' Company, London.

<sup>77</sup> Discussed in John William Burgon, *The Life and Times of Sir Thomas Gresham*, (London, 1839), vol. 1, pp.51-52 and illustrated in the same volume, p.3.

<sup>78</sup> Another ring of a similar date bears the same inscription, but is simpler in that it is not set with gems and the hoops join to form clasped hands at the bezel: VAM.851-1871.

marriage ceremony, the two hoops were rejoined to symbolise the union of the couple. Often the names of the couple were inscribed on each hoop.

A Curious Artist wrought 'em:  
With joynts so close as not to be perceiv'd;  
Yet are they both each others Counterpart.  
Her part had *Juan* inscrib'd, and his had *Zayda*.  
(You know those names are theirs:) and in the midst,  
A heart divided in two halves was plac'd.<sup>79</sup>

Perhaps though the most ubiquitous of all rings that can be associated with love and marriage is the posy ring. The term posy derives from the French word *poésie* for 'poetry', since the inscription usually rhymed. Strictly speaking a posy ring can be any type of ring that contains a posy, or motto. As Dalton points out 'many rings, which from their type or the nature of the subjects engraved on them were probably made for other uses, have been transformed into love-rings by the addition of amatory mottoes'.<sup>80</sup> George Puttenham in his 1589 work entitled *The Art of English Posie* discusses this practice.

There be also other like Epigrammes [...] and neuer contained aboue one verse, or two at the most, but the shorter the better, we call them Posies, and [...] vse them as deuises in rings and armes and about such courtly purposes.<sup>81</sup>

On the whole, the majority of extant posy rings in museum collections in their most basic form consist of a hoop, plain on the exterior and with an English inscription (the posy) inscribed on the inner face. A great number of these are gold, though there are a few examples in silver and even base metal, such as copper (figs.6.6-6.8).

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<sup>79</sup> John Dryden, *Don Sebastian, King of Portugal* (London: John Hindmarsh, 1690), p.122.

<sup>80</sup> O.M. Dalton, *A Catalogue of Rings in the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 1912), xlvii.

<sup>81</sup> George Puttenham, *The Art of English Posie. Contruiued into three Bookes: The First of Poets and Poesie, the second of Proportion, the third of Ornament* (London: printed by Richard Field, 1589), Lib.I, Chapter XXX, p.47.



Figure 6.6: Gold posy ring inscribed 'In \* god \* is \* my \* trost \*\*\*'; sixteenth century; English. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1961,12-2.189.



Figure 6.7: Silver-gilt posy ring inscribed '+THINKE x ON x ME'; sixteenth or seventeenth century; English. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe AF.1383.



Figure 6.8: Copper-alloy posy ring inscribed 'I LYKE MY CHO'; sixteenth or seventeenth century; English. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1961,12-2.37.

Gold was the most common of metals to be used for the making of a wedding ring and an explanation for this is offered by a thirteenth-century bishop.

One Protheus made a ring of iron with an adamant enclosed therein, as a pledge of love, because as iron subdueth all things, so doth love conquer all things, since nothing is more violent than its ardour, and, as an adamant cannot be broken, so love

cannot be overcome, for love is strong as death. In course of time gold rings set with gems were substituted for the adamantine ones of baser metal, because, as gold excelleth all other metal, so doth love excel all other blessings, and as gold is set off with gems, so is conjugal love set off by other virtues.<sup>82</sup>

Many of the posy rings have a diameter of around 2cm and a width often no more than 0.5cm. This small-scale nature means that these rings are fairly light-weight and thus more suited for a woman's delicate hand. It is not surprising therefore to find that a posy ring formed of a wider band and sharing characteristics most associated with those rings commissioned by serjeants-at-law – a Roman capital inscription and hallmarks to the outer face between raised borders – was accessioned as a serjeant's ring upon entering the British Museum in 1961 (fig.6.9).<sup>83</sup>



Figure 6.9: Gold alloy posy ring inscribed 'FERE GOD ONLI'; fifteenth or sixteenth century; English. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe, 1961,12-2.148.

In this instance it is only the inscription, and not any intrinsic qualities of the ring itself, that indicates this was intended as a posy ring. For, as will be explained later in Chapter 7, the mottoes found serjeant's rings were predominantly in Latin and made reference to the law.<sup>84</sup>

A large number of posy rings that survive are mostly seventeenth- or eighteenth-century examples, but there are a few that can be dated to an earlier period. The posy ring increased in popularity in the fifteenth century and examples from this period are often characterised by a French inscription to the outer face in Lombardic script or, later in the

<sup>82</sup> Cited in Jones, *Finger-Ring Lore*, p.295, note 1. The word adamant is an ancient term for a diamond and is from the Greek *adamas* meaning 'unconquerable' – see 'adamant' in Harold Newman, *An Illustrated Dictionary of Jewelry* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1981, reprinted 2005), p.12.

<sup>83</sup> The rings of the serjeants-at-law are dealt with in Chapter 7.

<sup>84</sup> Note the anomalous example of a nineteenth-century serjeant's ring that has a French inscription – British Museum, Prehistory and Europe, 1961,12-2.16.



century, black letter. This is then surrounded by floral or foliate motifs often enamelled in white (fig.6.10). Once in the sixteenth century, the posy increasingly becomes written in the vernacular, it is transferred to the inner face of the ring, and is written in Roman capitals (fig.6.11). Moving into the following century, the inscriptions begin to be italicised thus providing more space on the surface of the ring and therefore permitting longer posies (fig.6.12).



Figure 6.10: Gold posy ring inscribed in black letter 'en bon an'; fifteenth century; English. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1960.11-3.1.



Figure 6.11: Detail of gold posy ring inscribed in Roman capitals 'CONTINEW CONSTANT'; sixteenth or seventeenth century; English. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1961.12-2.65.

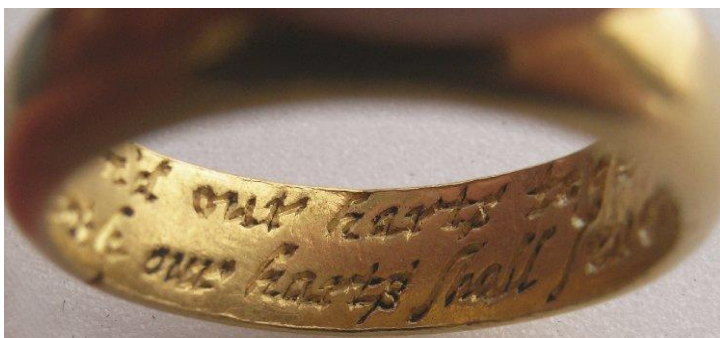


Figure 6.12: Detail of gold posy ring inscribed in italic script 'As love hath joyn'd our harts together/So none but death our harts shall sever'; Robert Tyte; Salisbury; 1595-1633 (active). British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1961.12-2.93.

These style conventions have been established from dated examples, such as *memento mori* rings, and can be applied to assist in dating, though as with any object type there are always exceptions. The posies from the wedding rings of Thomas Whythorne and Lady Katherine Grey cited above both date to the late-sixteenth century, yet the length of the inscriptions are indicative of a later period. This may indicate that the adoption of longer posies became fashionable at an earlier date and may require a re-examination of posy rings to determine more accurate dating.<sup>85</sup>

There is only one conclusive sign that a ring has a connection with marriage and that is the existence of the marriage trigram. This triangular arrangement of three initial letters is the one definitive indicator of marriage. Giese notes one such reference in the depositions, which she admits is a rare reference in such records – ‘ther was made an R an O and a K for bothe their names’.<sup>86</sup> This arrangement of letters occurs in at least one ring in the British Museum, one example of which has the letters R and A surmounted by the initial L, with the latter indicating the first letter of the couple’s surname and the two that sit below it representing the first names of the man and woman (fig.6.13). The same ring is also inscribed on the inner face with the following posy over two lines: ‘I lick I love I liue content/I made my chois not to repent’.



Figure 6.13: Gold ring inscribed in with a posy in italics, with a marriage trigram and maker’s mark ‘P’ in a triangular punch; sixteenth or seventeenth century; English. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1961,12-2.28.

<sup>85</sup> Many rings are punched with a maker’s mark on the inner face. Whilst in the past these marks have been noted, scholarship was unable to sufficiently assign rings to particular makers. Work currently being undertaken by Anthony Dove at the British Museum in identifying these makers has allowed for many rings in the collection to be attributed to individual goldsmiths and therefore more accurately dated. Dove’s work has extended to the collections of the Museum of London and the V&A and it is hoped that in the future a wider understanding of the extent of the work of English goldsmiths will be achieved.

<sup>86</sup> DL/C/214/552 cited in Giese, *Courtships*, p.140.

Unfortunately, the frequency of such marriage trigrams on surviving rings is limited and so there is a need to turn to the posies themselves and interpret their sentiment. The nature of the inscriptions on many rings is significant and variations of the same sentiments appear frequently that answer the need for mutual consent. Just under half of a sample group of thirty-eight from the several hundred posy rings in the British Museum's collection demonstrate rhetoric of choice, of an unchanging mind, or of lifelong commitment.<sup>87</sup> As noted by Swinburne and others, mutual consent was essential if a marriage was to be legally contracted. So the use of rhetoric that implies free choice and an unwavering mind would surely be a clear sign of this consent and intent to marry. Thus the presence of such posies would seem to indicate that such rings were used either for betrothal or marriage.

In her 2007 publication on the symbolic nature of rings Diana Scarisbrick prefers to identify the characteristic features that indicate a love ring and does not confine her work to only considering words as indicative of love, but also includes symbolism.<sup>88</sup> While such symbols are valid in determining love tokens, they cannot provide any proof of use as a tool of matrimony. Scarisbrick acknowledges that symbolism is merely indicative and accepts that without the presence of inscriptions there is no conclusive proof of marriage.<sup>89</sup>

The origin of many posies has been investigated by Dame Joan Evans in her 1931 publication *English Posies and Posy Rings*, in which she researched the posies contained on rings in her possession, a large number of which were donated to the British Museum in 1961. This work is invaluable but is by no means comprehensive, particularly as many more posy rings are coming to light through the Treasure Act of 1996. Determining a date for the first instance of a motto provides a start date for the production of a ring. Not all posies refer to love; some have biblical invocations, while others are more enigmatic and therefore difficult to contextualise and consequently date. 'No cut to unkindnes' is one such peculiar inscription that occurs on the inner face of a ring in the British Museum that has been assigned a broad dating of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries (fig.6.14). However, it would not be unreasonable to date this ring to the seventeenth century based on sources relating to the inscription.

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<sup>87</sup> See Appendix B.

<sup>88</sup> Scarisbrick, *Rings* (2007), pp.59-119.

<sup>89</sup> Scarisbrick, *Rings* (2007), p.81. A gimmel ring whose bezel forms the *fede* motif and inscribed CLEMEN.KESSELER DEN-25.AUG.AD.1607 certainly alludes to being a wedding ring, but without an overt statement relating to marriage it cannot be ascribed as such: VAM.854-1871, see *Princely Magnificence*, cat. no. 61.



Figure 6.14: Gold posy ring inscribed 'No cut to unkindnes'; sixteenth to eighteenth centuries; English. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe, AF.1349.

This ring was originally in the Braybrooke collection and the relevant catalogue entry acknowledges the difficulty in identifying this posy and postulates that it bears some reference to the words of Gratiano in *The Merchant of Venice*, 'a paltry ring/that she did giue me, whose posie was/for all the world like Cutlers poetry'.<sup>90</sup> This is seemingly an allusion to the practice of engraving verses on the blade of a knife and so Gratiano's words seem to reflect more the placing of a posy on the outer face of a ring and therefore conspicuously, rather than relate to this particular posy.

The ring's inscription is listed in *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs*, where the entry cites the following references:

1599 William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, Act III, Scene 2, line 183 – "This was the most unkindest cut of all";

1621 Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, I, ii, IV, viii (1651) 169 – "No cut, to unkindness, as the saying is: a frown and hard speech,...especially to courtiers, or such as attend upon great persons, is present death";

1659 James Howell, *English Proverbs*, 13a – "No cut to unkindness".<sup>91</sup>

The motto bears no amorous undertones. Posies could therefore be inscribed on rings that were not intended to be used as love tokens, although the term posy ring has now become synonymous with love and marriage. Whythorne cites an example of a non-amatory motto when recounting his encounters with another widow. He is her schoolmaster and servant but soon becomes her favourite, to the extent that she provides him with either money to buy clothing and jewels, or the materials with which to make such things. Whythorne soon

<sup>90</sup> Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, Act 5, Scene I, lines 147-49. The Braybrooke collection belonged to Richard Cornwallis Neville, fourth Baron Braybrooke. He was presented this ring by William Fuller Maitland on 14 March 1857. See Richard Cornwallis Neville (Lord Braybrooke), *Catalogue of Rings in the Collection of the Right Honourable Lord Braybrooke, Audley End* (S.I.: privately printed, 1873), cat. no. 187.

<sup>91</sup> *The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, revised by F.P.Wilson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

perceives that the relationship, innocent though it remains, is being discussed within the household. His course of action in response to this is to commission a gold ring for himself.

In the which I caused to be graven this sentence following: ‘where wily whispers wait work wisely, quod W’. This counsel I made so as every word began with a ‘W’ for my name. But the chief cause why I made it was to put me in mind to beware in all my sayings and doings, especially afore common whispers.<sup>92</sup>

## 6.4 Conclusion

Evidence from marriage depositions reveals that one of the fundamental difficulties in determining whether a ring was considered a legitimate token exchanged in the marriage ceremony and thus constituting a wedding ring is the fact that this was all subject to the interpretations of both the giver and receiver. These legal documents commonly show the defence claiming that the ring had been given and received merely as a token of goodwill, rather than as a symbol of contracted marriage or the future promise of a marriage.

In the case of Thomas Wye versus Agnes Bushy, Katherine Freame comments on the exchanges between the two saying ‘which [...] [Agnes] with much adoe received [...] telling her that she would take them, butt nott in the way of any marriage’.<sup>93</sup> Presumably then the presence of a posy that referred to the constancy of the wearer would mean that the marriage was more difficult to contest, though this appears not to be the case in the instance of Mary Porredge of Ospringe versus John Colyer. For, according to one deposition, Mary sent John ‘a weddinge ring with this poysy in yt viz yow have my harte till deathe departe’.<sup>94</sup> It is difficult to conceive that the presence of such an inscription could be indicative of anything else but a promise of marriage. Yet this simply provides more evidence to the complex and ambiguous nature of betrothal and marriage in the early modern period.

Returning to the satirical comments of Samuel Butler cited above, he provides an interesting commentary on contemporary practices in *Hudibras* and makes explicit his thoughts on how the ring actually signifies nothing, for the woman is free to change her mind following the ceremony.

That Tool of Matrimony, a Ring,  
With which th’ unsanctifi’d Bridegroom  
Is marry’d onley to a thumb;

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<sup>92</sup> Whythorne, *Autobiography*, pp.32-38.

<sup>93</sup> DL/C/213/829 cited in Giese, *Courtships*, p.88.

<sup>94</sup> Canterbury Cathedral Archives and Library, Canterbury, MS. J/J2 18, Colyer v. Porredge, (1596-7) cited in O’Hara, “The Language of Tokens”, p.27.

[...]  
The Bride to nothing but her Will,  
That nulls the After-marriage still.<sup>95</sup>

The idea of broken promises dominates the language of marriage depositions and this is to be expected, for such documents are only in existence as a result of failed marriages. Promises can be made and broken at the stages of both betrothal and marriage, as is evident from the various cases cited above. Since a marriage could only be legally upheld if there was witnessed mutual consent from both parties, there was some degree of flexibility should one party wish to dissolve the marriage and could prove a lack of consent. There were certain actions and words that served to indicate that a marriage had taken place, with the ring as the most visible and tangible of all signs. Yet since this was all subject to interpretation by the witnesses there was no certainty of the outcome.

Demonstrating a profound sensitivity towards this interpretative nature that governed marriage under canon law is a final cautionary tale from Whythorne.<sup>96</sup> He shows acknowledgement of how witnessed words and behaviours could be construed as signs of consent to marriage or betrothal. On a Thursday, the protagonist accompanies the chaplain to breakfast at the house of a certain Mr. G. who is at this time not present, although his housekeeper Mistress Elisabeth is. Once they have finished dining, the housekeeper makes reference to Whythorne being her husband. Whythorne, believing this to be in jest, 'smiled and said to her that, if she had me to be her husband, she should then be well husbanded'. The naming of someone as your spouse could be cited in court cases as proof of marriage. When Whythorne makes a toast to his host, she takes offence to his formal address saying 'And why not wife? Will ye not be my husband?' Whythorne is then compelled to humour Mistress Elisabeth, referring to her as his 'gentle wife'. When she then responds with the words 'I pledge you, good husband', the priest immediately offers to formalise this exchange and attempts to join their hands. The joining of hands served as another visible sign of marriage, one also used in the church ceremony, and the *fede* motif was popular on rings associated with love and marriage (fig.6.15). Whythorne explains how he then had to retract his words and refuse her hands, as he felt the situation may have been misinterpreted.

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<sup>95</sup> Butler, "Hudibras" Part III, Canto II, p.100.

<sup>96</sup> Whythorne, *Autobiography*, pp.75-76.



Figure 6.15: Gold and enamelled gimmel ring with clasped hands inscribed inside each hoop 'AS HANDS BE SHVT', 'SO SEWERLY KNYT'. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe, 1959,2-9.40.

Although he considered the words and actions solely as a form of merriment, Whythorne remained fully aware that too many indicators of marriage in the presence of a witness, no less a priest, may have been understood as consent to marriage. As the story progresses, the reader learns that Mistress Elsabeth has taken the event more seriously. Thus perceptions of marriage and betrothal in the early modern period were as potent as the signs and symbols that constituted it. While the ring served as tangible evidence that has survived to the present day, it can by no means be used to determine that a marriage was legally contracted and indeed upheld. Surviving material evidence needs to be considered in the context of betrothal and marriage practices, and the nature of the inscriptions incised upon posy rings needs to be analysed within such an interpretative framework.

This chapter has examined the role of the ring within betrothal and marriage rituals to underscore the importance of this item of jewellery to a man in the early modern period. Since marriage was a key factor in demonstrating the potential for mature, patriarchal authority, the ring (as a visual indicator of a union) was a very powerful tool and was itself representative of masculine ideals.

## Chapter 7

### Homosociability: rings of the serjeants-at-law

The rings in the previous chapter were generally given by men to women. But there was a whole category of rings that were designed to be given by men to other men. This chapter considers the role of jewellery in marking out male-male relationships and networks by considering the ritualistic giving of rings by newly-created serjeants-at-law.

The xvij day of October was made vii serjants of the coyffe; at ix of the cloke they went to Westmynster halle in ther gownes and hodes of morrey and russet, and ther servants in the sam colers, and ther was gyffyn a charge and othe by the kynges juges, and the old serjants. This done, they retornyed with the juges and the old serjants, and men of law, unto Gray-yn to dener, and mony of the ... for ther was a grett fest, and my lord mayre and the [aldermen], and many a nobull man; and the new serjants gayf to [the judges], and the old serjants and men of the law, rynges of gold, every serjant gayff llyke ryngs.<sup>1</sup>

When the London citizen and merchant-taylor Henry Machyn (1496/1498-1563) described in his diary the events surrounding the admittance of seven serjeants-at-law into the Order of the Coif in 1552, he also noted an important characteristic associated with this order: the giving of gold rings. The significance of gold rings is described in his account of the call of 1577 by the serjeant-at-law William Bendlowes (1516-1584), who wrote reports on legal cases for the period 1534 to 1579.<sup>2</sup>

There ringes that they giue be of gold w[hi]ch is on of the best mettalls, the same betokeneth theire bountifullnes, they be round they haue no end it sheweth theire integritie.<sup>3</sup>

This practice seems to date back to the fourteenth century and the earliest written record of this relates to the charitable bequest of five gold rings made by Thomas Morice in 1368, following his elevation to a higher legal rank some years earlier.<sup>4</sup> That the Order was

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<sup>1</sup> John Gough Nichols, ed., *The Diary of Henry Machyn, Citizen and Merchant-Taylor of London, from A.D.1550 to A.D.1563* (London: The Camden Society, 1848?), p.26.

<sup>2</sup> "Reports of Law Cases by William Bendlowes, Serjeant-at-Law; 25 Hen. VIII.-21 Eliz. [1534-1579], with Index", British Library, Additional MS 25189.

<sup>3</sup> "Reports of [...] William Bendlowes", Additional MS 25189, f.133r.

<sup>4</sup> 'Item I leave to the image of the said St Mary five gold rings which were left over when I gave gold in the lord king's court' ('Item lego ymagini sancte Marie predictae quinque anulos aureos qui remanserunt quando dedi aurum in curia domini regis') – London Records Office, Court of Hustings roll 96/101 cited and translated in John Hamilton Baker, *Order of the Serjeants at Law* (London: Selden Society, 1984), pp.94-95.



firmly established by the fourteenth century can be attested to by the inclusion of a serjeant-at-law as one of the pilgrims in Geoffrey Chaucer's (c.1340-1400) late fourteenth-century work *The Canterbury Tales*.<sup>5</sup> In the prologue to the text, the character is defined as one who is 'wise and wary [...] one of great excellence, judicious, worthy of reverence'.<sup>6</sup> Following the enforcement of the 1873 Act of Judicature in 1875, it was no longer necessary for a judge of the High Court or the Court of Appeal to be admitted first to the rank of Serjeant and thus subsequently after May 1875 no new appointments to the Order of the Coif were made.

A serjeant-at-law is described by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as 'A member of a superior order of barristers'.<sup>7</sup> In his history of this order, J.H. Baker makes it clear that 'The serjeants had a degree, not an office, and they graduated by "creation"'.<sup>8</sup> By becoming a serjeant, these lawyers were granted exclusive rights to plead in the Court of Common Pleas, one of three of the superior English courts for the trial of civil cases. As such, lawyers of this rank had reached 'the highest degree of the legal profession' and were required to wear their robes at all times in public, to ensure that they were instantly recognisable and that they maintained their professionalism.<sup>9</sup> As noted above, a key element of admittance to this order was the giving of gold rings.

More recently attention has turned to the rings themselves, the giving of which seems to stand in stark opposition to the receipt of insignia by those bestowed with the honour of entering a chivalric order, such as the Order of the Garter. Mark Emanuel has compiled a catalogue of the known surviving rings associated with the Order.<sup>10</sup> A work of this nature is invaluable for it draws together pieces from museum and private collections, which allows for comparative research. The catalogue comprises eighty-six entries and in his foreword to the work Emanuel estimates that over the five hundred years during which rings were known to be given by serjeants-at-law there may have been between 112,000 and 224,000 rings produced for this purpose.<sup>11</sup> During the period covering the reigns of Henry VIII (r.1509-

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<sup>5</sup> Edward H. Warren traces the origins of the Order to at least as early as the reign of Henry II (r.1154-1189) and names the thirteen Serjeants called by the sovereign – Edward H. Warren, "Serjeants-at-Law; the Order of the Coif", *Virginia Law Review*, 28, no. 7 (May 1942): 911-950, p.919 and note 18.

<sup>6</sup> Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, verse translation by David Wright (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p.9.

<sup>7</sup> "sergeant | serjeant, n.", OED Online, (Oxford University Press, June 2012) <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/176417?redirectedFrom=serjeant> (accessed August 17, 2012).

<sup>8</sup> Baker, *Order*, v.

<sup>9</sup> Baker, *Order*, p.67.

<sup>10</sup> Mark Emanuel, *The Surviving Rings of the Serjeants at Law* (London: privately printed, 2008).

<sup>11</sup> Emanuel, *Surviving Rings*, p.3. Emanuel uses information provided by Baker on the estimated amounts of gold used in the rings (from half to one ton) and calculates the number of rings made by taking 70 grains as an average weight per ring – see Baker, *Order*, p.465.

1547) to James I (r.1603-1625), inclusive, a total of one hundred and eighty-three serjeants were appointed, with only fourteen of their commissioned rings surviving today.<sup>12</sup>

Sovereign (reign dates)	No. of serjeants appointed	No. of surviving rings
Henry VIII (1509-1547)	45	6
Edward VI (1547-1553)	14	1
Mary I (1553-1558)	10	2
Elizabeth I (1558-1603)	63	5
James I (1603-1625)	51	0
Total	183	14

Table 7.1: Extant rings of the serjeants-at-law, 1509-1625.

Given that such quantities of these rings were produced, yet with so small a survival rate suggests that these objects were perhaps valued more for their intrinsic worth than their emotional value. A notable case of this is with reference to rings given to the sovereign. Despite the fact that the sovereign received a ring from every serjeant-at-law created from 1555 continuously until 1875, the Royal Collection holds only one such ring. An entry in the 1897 inventory of jewels at Windsor Palace may provide a clue as to the fate of the royal gifts.

4 Gold Basins – 3 of them made entirely of the Rings presented to the Queen by the Sargeants at Law on being called to that state & degree – the fourth one that of the largest size, also chiefly made from the rings, the small portion of gold added, taken from the setting of one of the pieces of Indian Jewellery sent to the Queen in 1863.<sup>13</sup>

The record from the royal inventory shows that Queen Victoria (r.1837-1901) prized these gifts of gold only for their material worth and thus their ability to be recycled (in this instance) into gold basins.<sup>14</sup>

Traditionally, every newly-created serjeant-at-law was required to present a ring of gold to various offices and these were known as *fidei simbolo*, or ‘rings of duty’. An account of the creation of ten serjeants in 1522 gives an indication of the recipients of these rings of

<sup>12</sup> See Warren, "Serjeants-at-Law", footnote 14 where he has enumerated the serjeants for each reign from an alphabetical list of all serjeants created from 1164 until 1875 as cited in Alexander Pulling, *The Order of the Coif* (London: William Clowes & Son, 1897), unpaginated pages following the table of contents.

<sup>13</sup> Windsor Castle, Inventory of Jewels (1897), f.457 (Sundries etc.), cited in Emanuel, *Surviving Rings*, p.5, note 11.

<sup>14</sup> Caution is advised with taking this example as being indicative of attitudes in the sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries, for the Order ceased to exist beyond 1875 and therefore Victoria may have considered the rings as mere tokens of an outmoded institution.

duty and the manner of receipt.<sup>15</sup> Chosen ‘for ther konnyng, discrecion, and wysdome, [...] by the kyng’s highnes, and his honorabill councelle, to the gret promocyone and dignytie of the office of a serjaunt of the lawe’ these men, in turn of eldest to youngest, had their rings delivered by existing serjeants.<sup>16</sup>

And then he that dealith the Ryngs for the eldest of the newe Seraunts shall ryse up as he sittyth amonge the Offycers of the Comyne Place, and shall stonde upone the myddes of the borde of the Comyne Place [...] he shall knele downe byfore my Lord Chaunceler; and seye, that the seid eldest of the new Serjaunts recomendith hym to his Grace; and sendith hym a tokyne of his Creacione, and kysse it, and delyver it to hym: and in lyke maner he shall delyver a Ryng to my Lord Treasurer: and anoder to my Lord Prive Seall, and anoder to the chieff Justice of the Kyng’s Benche; and anoder to the chieff Justice of the Comyne Place; and so forth to the oder Justices, Pronotaries, and oder Officers of the Place. And then shall the secund and the third of the eldest of the olde Serjaunts fetch the secund of the newe Serjaunts, and demeane them sylff as the fyrst dyd [...] And then he that shall deale the Ryngs for hym shall demeane hym sylff as the fyrst dealer dyd. And after lyke maner, shall the residew of the eldest and newe Serjaunts and ther dealers demeane them sylff. And when all that is doone, then my Lord Chaunceller shall geff them thanks for their Ryngs, and a gret commendacion, and his soleme blyssing.<sup>17</sup>

When William Bendlowes was admitted to the order in 1555, along with six other men, further details are given about their call such as the food that was served at their celebration feast held at Serjeants’ Inn and the draper appointed to make their robes and servants’ liveries.<sup>18</sup> Crucially, for the purpose of this chapter, there is substantial information provided about the rings that were to be given.

These Serjeants made choice of one Nicholas Deering, Goldsmith, to make their Rings of Gold, who was allowed for the fashion of those Rings, which were given to the King and Queen; viz. for each Ring 20*d*. And for the fashion of every other Ring 12*d*.

It was also agreed, that all the Rings of 10*s*. in gold, and above, should be made with Swaies; and all under that value, their fashion to be plain. Likewise that every Ring of gold of 20*s*. value, should contain in gold weight 18*s*. two shillings being allowed for the fashion of every such Ring. And that every Ring of 16*s*. in gold, to weigh 14*s*. and

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<sup>15</sup> Sir William Dugdale, *Origines Juridicales, or Historical Memorials of the English Laws, Courts of Justice, Forms of Tryall, Punishment in Cases Criminal, Law Writers, Law Books, Grants and Settlements of Estates, Degree of Serjeant, Innes of Court and Chancery* (London: printed by F. and T. Warren, 1666), pp.116-17. The serjeants admitted on this occasion were Mr. Rudhale, Mr. Fitz-Jamys, Mr. Porte, Mr. Faierfax, Mr. Spilman, Mr. Broune, Mr. Shelley, Mr. Willughby, Mr. Norwich, and Mr. Inglefeld.

<sup>16</sup> William Herbert, *Antiquities of the Inns of Court and Chancery: Containing Historical and Descriptive Sketches Relative to Their Original Foundation, Customs, Ceremonies, Buildings, Government, &c, with a Concise History of the English Law* (London: Vernor & Hood, 1804), p.361.

<sup>17</sup> Dugdale, *Origines Juridicales*, pp.116-17.

<sup>18</sup> Dugdale, *Origines Juridicales*, pp.129, 131-35. The draper was Mr Albany of Watling Street.

two shillings to be allowed for the fashion. Likewise that every Ring of 6s. 8d. in gold, to bear his own making. And every Ring of 5s. 4d. in gold, to have allowed 6d. for fashion, and no more. And every Ring of 4s. in gold, to bear his full weight in gold, besides the fashion. And lastly that all the said several gold Rings should be of one value, and contain one weight *secundum ratum*, as afore; and that every Ring do contain one value, without diminution, in form severally before agreed on.

Note, that each Serjeant disbursed and delivered to the Goldsmith, towards the provision of Rings, viz. in half Sovereignes, the weightiest that could be gotten, £20.

The Rings given to the King and Queen, were made of the finest Angel gold, every Ring being in value, besides fashion, - £3 6s. 8d.<sup>19</sup>

The making of these rings was therefore highly regulated, to ensure that each recipient was given a ring appropriate to his station and that each new serjeant could not show greater largesse in the giving of more expensive gifts. It is also significant that Philip II of Spain (1527-1598) and Mary I are mentioned and this seems to be the first instance of the sovereign and consort being presented with a ring by each serjeant. At least two extant rings from this call are known, with one being in the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum (fig.7.1). Neither seems to be of significant enough weight to suggest royal ownership.<sup>20</sup>



Figure 7.1: Gold serjeant's ring engraved to the outer face with the inscription 'LEX + EST + ARMA + REGVM'; made by Nicholas Deering, England, 1555. Victoria and Albert Museum M.54-1960.

Information is also provided that shows how wide the network of obligation by the new serjeants extended, as well as revealing the strict hierarchy that governed the presentation of these rings of duty. Clearly the sovereign and her consort received rings with the greatest quantity of gold and more was spent on the fashioning of these rings, which suggests they may have been decorated more than is indicated by surviving pieces. The cost

<sup>19</sup> Dugdale, *Origines Juridicales*, p.130.

<sup>20</sup> Both rings are published in Emanuel, *Surviving Rings*, cat. nos. 13-14. No.13 is VAM.M.54-1960 and it has a diameter of 21mm and height of 6mm. No.14 is in a private collection and was first published in the Inner Temple Year Book (2004/05), p.53 with Emanuel noting that Baker commented on the lightweight nature of this ring.

of the rings that were given in an official capacity provides strong evidence of rank of particular offices.

<b>Recipient</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>s</b>	<b>d</b>
Lord Chancellor Lord Steward Lord Treasurer Lord Privy Seal Lord Chamberlain Chief Justice of the King's Bench Chief Justice of the Common Pleas Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer	0	20	0
Justices of the Benches x 6 Master of the Rolls	0	16	0
Barons of the Exchequer x 3	0	14	0
Each existing Serjeant-at-Law King's Attorney General King's Solicitor General	0	6	8
Clerk of the Council <i>Custos Brevium</i> of the Common Pleas Clerks of the Warrants	0	4	0
Clerks of the Crown x 2	0	4	8
Chirographer Prothonotaries x 3	0	5	0
Filazers & Exigenters x 16	0	2	6

Table 7.2: Recipients and values of the ordinary rings given by the serjants-at-law, 1555.<sup>21</sup>

<b>Recipient</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>s</b>	<b>d</b>
Queen Mary Prince Philip of Spain	3	6	8
Warden of the Fleet Master Marshall	0	11	0
Steward of the Feast Comptroller of the Feast	0	20	0

Table 7.3: Recipients and values of other rings that were given by the serjeant-at-law, 1555.<sup>22</sup>

In all at the 1555 call, the newly-created serjeants each spent £20 4s. on the ordinary rings listed in Table 7.2, with a total expense lavished on this tradition being £141 8s. This figure did not include the extra rings given to the sovereign and her consort, nor those listed also in Table 7.3. In addition to these rings of duty, serjeants could commission rings to be given to family and personal acquaintances. According to Baker, in 1736 while 1,409 rings of

<sup>21</sup> Information taken from Dugdale, *Origines Juridicales*, p.130.

<sup>22</sup> Information taken from Dugdale, *Origines Juridicales*, p.130.

duty were presented about 4,500 private rings were also given.<sup>23</sup> Given the prolific nature of these rings, it is therefore somewhat surprising to note their absence from certain standard books of reference on jewellery.<sup>24</sup>

These rings, commonly referred to as serjeants' rings, formed an integral element to the institution of the Order of the Coif. Whilst most memberships to orders involved the receiving of insignia, serjeants instead gave gifts of gold in the form of a ring and these acts of giving reinforced male social bonds and networks of obligation. The only exception to this male receipt of these rings occurred on occasions when the sovereign was female.<sup>25</sup> What is important to remember is that the ceremony associated with the Order was not an investiture; rather it signalled an admittance into a rank and one that required payment in the form of rings.

According to J.P. Dawson, the gold given at this ceremony was to balance out the privileges that the new serjeants would receive.<sup>26</sup> Likewise Warren considers the rings as a form of payment for admittance into the Order, concluding this from an analysis of the term 'pony' that was used for the person chosen to present the rings on behalf of a serjeant. He states that the sixteenth-century slang term for hard cash 'legem pone' must have become associated with the rings and thus synonymous with the giver of the rings.<sup>27</sup>

Machyn's observation that 'every serjant gayff llyke ryngs' is accurate to a certain extent. As noted above and illustrated in Tables 7.2 and 7.3, the size, weight, and thus value of these rings were all highly regulated, adhering to a strict hierarchy. By 'same', Machyn is actually referring to the form of and the inscription on the rings that were termed 'ordinary rings'. Fortunately, it is possible to establish the exact form and style of ring mentioned by Machyn in 1552, for an example was discovered at East Rudham in 1977 and is now in the collections of the Lynn Museum in Norfolk (fig.7.2).

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<sup>23</sup> Baker, *Order*, p.97.

<sup>24</sup> There is no mention of serjeants' rings in Hugh Tait, ed., *7000 Years of Jewellery*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London: British Museum Press, 2008 repr.); Diana Scarisbrick, *Jewellery in Britain 1066-1837: A Documentary, Social, Literary and Artistic Survey* (Norwich: Michael Russell, 1994); or Diana Scarisbrick, *Rings: Jewelry of Power, Love and Loyalty* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2007).

<sup>25</sup> For the period covered by this thesis, the only female rulers were Mary I and Elizabeth I, though note that the earliest record of the sovereign being given rings by the serjeants dates to 1555.

<sup>26</sup> J.P. Dawson, *The Oracles of the Law* (1968), pp.14, 17, 23 cited in Baker, *Order*, p.4.

<sup>27</sup> Warren, "Serjeants-at-Law", p.940 and footnote 58.



Figure 7.2: Gold serjeant's ring inscribed to the outer surface 'PLEBS x SINE x LEGE x RUIT'; England, 1552. Lynn Museum, KILLM:1978.260.

The main feature of the rings given by the serjeants is the inscription of a motto to the visible outer surface. This motto made reference mostly to the crown or the law, but also to classical texts or a recent political event. So, at the first call following the restoration of the monarchy in May 1660 the motto was 'Adest Carolus magnus' (The great Charles is here).<sup>28</sup> Whilst the mottos were mostly in Latin there are a few exceptions to this that occur later.<sup>29</sup> Every call to the rank of Serjeant was characterised by its unique motto and it is often this information that assists with the dating of these rings.<sup>30</sup>

The identification of the Lynn Museum ring with the call of 1552 results from a passage in a manuscript at Lincoln Inn's Library that appears to have been written by Sir James Dyer (1510-1582). Dyer recalls how on 19 May 1552 he received a royal writ stating that he was to be called to the degree of serjeant later that year, along with Robert Brooke, Thomas Gawdy, William Stamford, William Dalyson, Rudolph Rokeby, and Richard Catlin.<sup>31</sup> It would seem that from Machyn's diary entry, the actual creation took place on 17 October 1552 and, according to Dyer, at this time the seven serjeants 'gave rings with this motto, *Plebs sine lege ruit*'.<sup>32</sup>

Prior to the call of 1510, it appears that the motto 'VIVAT REX ET LEX' (Long live the king and the law) was adopted for a number of years, since there are stylistic differences

<sup>28</sup> Baker, *Order*, p.468.

<sup>29</sup> 'Tout temps prist' (Always ready) appears on a ring of 1853 in the British Museum [P&E 1961,12-2.16], while Emanuel, *Surviving Rings*, cat. 86 is another example in French belonging to the Inner Temple. Emanuel also states that there was one motto in English and at the last call the motto was in German, p.3.

<sup>30</sup> Broad dating of these rings can also be achieved by examining the script of the motto. Early rings and those of the first half the sixteenth century have mottos in a Lombardic script; this is then followed by Roman capitals, which continue to be used until a cursive script is adopted from the eighteenth century onwards.

<sup>31</sup> Sir James Dyer and John Vaillant, *Reports of Cases in the Reigns of Hen. VIII., Edw. VI., Q. Mary, and Q. Eliz. Translated, with Additional References ... And an Index*, by J. Vaillant. To This Edition a Life of the Author Is Prefixed, Etc., 3 vols. (London, 1794), vol.1, O3r. I was alerted to the existence of this manuscript by Tim Thorpe, Collections Officer at the Lynn Museum, Norfolk as a copy of the relevant page from a Latin edition of Dyer's *Reports* (1666) is kept on the object file for the Lynn Museum ring.

<sup>32</sup> Dyer and Vaillant, *Reports*, vol.1, O3r.

between the extant rings bearing this inscription.<sup>33</sup> The rings are all of 22 carat gold formed of a flat, broad band that does not terminate with a bezel or shoulders. Based on surviving material evidence, the earliest example of the form that becomes distinctive of this object type through until the nineteenth century appears in a ring belonging to the Victoria & Albert Museum dated to 1555 (see fig.7.1 above). On this type of ring the motto is flanked by double raised borders at the top and bottom of the hoop. However, it would seem that this form was not necessarily employed exclusively in the making of the rings given by the serjeants-at-law. This is evidenced by a ring in the British Museum that came from the collection of the antiquarian Sir John Evans (1823-1908). It was recorded by him as ‘A Serjeant’s ring. Hemel Hampsted (sic) 1864’, in reference to its original findspot (fig.7.3).<sup>34</sup>



Figure 7.3: Gold alloy posy ring, inscribed to the outer surface ‘+FERE GOD ONLI’; England; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1961,12-2.148.

Although the form of the ring alludes to those of the serjeants’ commissions, there are certain elements that make it unlikely to be such a ring. The quality of the metal and lightness of the ring would suggest that it is not made of 22 carat gold and scientific analysis undertaken at the British Museum in 2007 confirmed that it is made of a gold alloy. While the motto being in English is unusual, though not improbable, the fact it makes no reference to the law or the crown is problematic. Furthermore, this particular inscription appears on a posy ring with a possible dating to the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries.<sup>35</sup> Finally, a silver-gilt ring in the British Museum of similar form and style (AF.1383) and inscribed on the exterior ‘+ THINKE x ON x ME’ is quite clearly a posy ring. These examples demonstrate that

<sup>33</sup> Note that of these rings published by Emanuel, nos. 3, 4 and 5 are all similar in style and appear to date from the late-fifteenth century. Cat. no. 6 was discovered in 2002 and is of the same style but its current whereabouts is unknown so further comparison is not possible.

<sup>34</sup> Noted in the object’s acquisition record held in the department of Prehistory and Europe, British Museum.

<sup>35</sup> British Museum, Prehistory and Europe AF.1231 – the inscription is spelt ‘Feare God Only’ and is placed on the inner surface of the hoop.



caution must be had when determining a ring's usage. Assumptions cannot be based on form and every element of the object must be considered as part of the whole. Though ultimately, it is the context of giving that essentially defines a ring as a serjeant's ring.

Where a number of rings survive bearing the same motto, striking similarities are often evident which would suggest a single maker. The practice of using the same goldsmith can be proven in later years, when the rings often bear the punch of a maker.<sup>36</sup> Despite the absence of a maker's mark, it has been suggested that three extant rings relating to the call of June 1521 were made by Oliver Dawes.<sup>37</sup> Each is virtually identical, though the orthography of the mottos varies slightly. Furthermore, the one that is now in the Chester Museum has enamelled lettering. This may suggest that all of these rings were at one time enamelled, or it could indicate that the Chester ring was a personal gift and not a ring of duty. Interesting to note are the dimensions of these three rings, for the slight differences in weight are evidence of the hierarchical structure governing the production of the rings.

Location	Museum no.	Diameter (mm)	Width (mm)	Weight (gr)	Inscription
British Museum	AF.1746	21.336		3.43	LEGIS + EXECVCO * REGIS * PSERVACIO *
British Museum	1879,8-20.1	22.352		2.07	LEGIS + EXECVO * REGIC + PSERVA <sup>O</sup> *
Chester Museum	Unknown	17.78	5.08	1.88	LEG <sup>e</sup> + EX <sup>O</sup> * REGIS . PREs <sup>O</sup> *

Table 7.4: Rings from the call of June 1521.

There are a few contemporary references that underscore the importance of the value of the rings. Perhaps most notable is Sir John Fortescue (c.1397-1479) writing between 1468 and 1471 in *De Laudibus Legum Angliae*. He notes that after having received the state and degree of serjeant-at-law, the new serjeants 'will give away gold, according to the custom of the realm'.<sup>38</sup> Fortescue explains that 'Each of them [the serjeants] will give gold rings to the value in all of £40 at least in English money', not failing to add that when he was appointed

<sup>36</sup> For example the mark of the goldsmith Richard Dipple (active from 1778) is present on four extant rings with the motto 'Reverentia Legum' (Respect of the law), which was used at the call of February 1787 – see Emanuel, *Surviving Rings*, cat. nos. 39-42. Two of the rings are in private collections, while one is in the British Museum (Prehistory and Europe AF.1748) and one is in the Victoria and Albert Museum (M.57-1960).

<sup>37</sup> Emanuel, *Surviving Rings*, cat. nos. 8-10.

<sup>38</sup> 'Dabit aurum secundum consuetudinem regni' – John Fortescue and Stanley Bertram Chimes, *Sir John Fortescue. De Laudibus Legum Anglie*, edited and translated with introduction and notes by S. B. Chimes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1942), pp.122-23.

to the rank of Serjeant he spent £50 on rings.<sup>39</sup> Fortescue then itemises the recipients of the rings and the values that each ring should equate to, mentioning also that it was customary to give rings to friends.<sup>40</sup> It is only possible to speculate on how and why Fortescue spent more on the commissioning of his rings. If the practice was not yet at this time strictly regulated then this could account for the twenty-five percent increase in expected expenditure. The elevated cost could also indicate a larger number of private commissions, though it would appear more as if Fortescue was highlighting his largesse in relation to these rings. Almost two centuries later he is referenced as an authority on the subject of these rings by Sir John Kelyng (bap.1607; d.1671), Lord Chief Justice from 1665 until his death and a recipient of rings by newly-appointed serjeants:

Seventeen serjeants being made the 14<sup>th</sup> day of November, a daye or two after, Serjeant Powis, the junior of them all, coming to the King's Bench bar, Lord Chief Justice Kelynge told him that he had something to say to him, viz. the rings which he and the rest of the serjeants had given weighed but eighteen shillings apiece; whereas Fortescue, in his book *De Laudibus Legum Angliae*, says, 'The rings given to the Chief Justices and the Chief Baron ought to weigh twenty shillings apiece;' and that he spoke not this expecting a recompence but that it might not be drawn into a precedent, and that the young gentlemen there might taken notice of it.<sup>41</sup>

Comments such as these suggest that these rings held no value other than that of their monetary worth and that it was deemed important to acknowledge rank and superiority through these gifts of gold. Although Kelyng sought no payment from the serjeants with regards to the rings lacking 2 shillings worth, his need to make the fact known is interesting. The scarcity of such rings today is certainly indicative of them being recycled for hard cash when financial hardship demanded it. These serjeants' rings seem to be no more than a form of payment upon admittance into the Order of the Coif. That there was no distinguishing feature to indicate differences between rings given by the serjeants to a single recipient means that there is no personal attachment between giver and receiver. In fact, once the goldsmith had been selected by the serjeants he would simply be producing *en masse* a number of rings that conformed to the expected value of an individual recipient.

Even the circumstances of giving removed completely any possible attachment between commissioner and recipient: 'every Serjeant made choice of the Benchers of that

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<sup>39</sup> 'quilibet eorum dabit anulos de auro ad valenciam in toto xli<sup>ta</sup> librarum ad minus monete Anglie' – Fortescue, *Legum Anglie*, pp.122-23; .

<sup>40</sup> Fortescue, *Legum Anglie*, pp.123-25.

<sup>41</sup> I Modern, Case 30 (Mich.) cited in *Notes and Queries*, ser.1, vol.i, (1852), p.181; and Warren, "Serjeants-at-Law", footnote 58.

House, whereof he was a member, to see the disposing of the Rings, in a decent manner, unto the persons'.<sup>42</sup> Thus, through the mediation of a third party the rings were handed from serjeant to receiver. This maintained degrees of distinction and consequently the networks of obligation, while forging homosocial bonds between the serjeant and the intermediary. Nevertheless, from Henry VIII's reign a sense of brotherhood was retained, with existing serjeants offering rings on behalf of the newest members. As for the rings that were offered to the sovereign, it would appear that tradition prevailed; rather than existing serjeants presenting the gold, this honour was given to the incumbent Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. At the call of 1577 Sir Nicholas Bacon (1510-1579), as Lord Keeper, was addressed directly by the eldest of the seven new serjeants.

The auncient of those vij saide to the saide lorde keep[er] these wordes or other in effect as do followes scil. Yf it please you my lord keep[er] by the auncient order in this realme it hathe bene accustomed that the newe Serieantes at their Creac[i]on should gyue to the kinges or queenes highnes of this Realme for the tyme being a ringe of gold in token of their dueties and thanks to their maiesties, and also it hathe bene the olde custome that the same serieantes shoulde humblie desyre the lorde Chauncelor of this Realme or the lord Keep[er] of the great seale of Englande for the tyme being to receiue that Rynge of them and to delyuer it to his or her Ma[ies]tie: Therefore I and my brethren here most humblie praie yo[u]r good lordshipp to take this rynge and to delyuer the same accordingly, and then he to kysse that rynge and sende it vp by him, who kysseth his hande & taketh it and promyseth to delyuer it.<sup>43</sup>

The single puzzling element of this text is the reference to the ring in the singular. The words seem to indicate a merging of resources by the new serjeants. It may be that by this time, only a single ring was produced. However, this did not appear to be the case in the first instance of the sovereign's receipt of such a ring in 1555, with those presented to Mary and her consort, Philip of Spain.

It is difficult to ascertain contemporary attitudes towards these rings presented by the serjeants-at-law. An entry in the inventory taken on the death of Henry Howard (1540-1614), earl of Northampton, in 1614 may provide some means of assessing these views. Howard held the position of Lord Privy Seal from 1608 until his death and it was in this official capacity that he was in receipt of rings from new serjeants.<sup>44</sup> There are no known surviving

<sup>42</sup> Dugdale, *Origines Juridicales*, p.131.

<sup>43</sup> "Reports of [...] William Bendlowes", Additional 25189, ff.131v.-132r.

<sup>44</sup> There were no creations in 1608. From 1609 until Howard's death in June 1614 five men were created serjeants-at-law: in 1609, John Denham and Edward Bromley; in 1610, the recorder of London Henry Mountagu; in 1611, William Methwould; and in 1612, John Davis. The next creation took place on 23 June

serjeants' rings from this period, but in the 1614 inventory there is a record of 'V sergeantes ringes waighinge one ounce, three quarters, 4 graines', which have a combined value of £4 10s.<sup>45</sup> Further research to determine whether Howard bequeathed these rings could provide an insight into attitudes towards such gifts. For, if they were given in a will then over the course of time personal attachment has dissipated and this is perhaps understandable. If Howard himself neglected to bequeath the rings then it could indicate that he was not concerned with their subsequent fate of inevitable recycling, and that these rings of duty were nothing more than a means of acknowledging entry into a fraternity.

Understanding what these rings meant to a serjeant or a recipient is not of primary concern for the purposes of this thesis. What is more important is knowing that the rings given by a newly-created serjeant-at-law physically marked out his networks of obligation and indicated his personal relationships. So while commentators of relatively modern times have suggested that the rings were no more than a payment for the receipt of the privilege to plead in the Court of Common Pleas, they actually served to mark out a man worthy of an honour. The rings then mapped out male-male relationships that were vital in the early modern period. A smaller group of rings that functioned in the same way is dealt with in the following chapter.

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1614, seven days after Howard's death. Information taken from Dugdale, *Origines Juridicales*, Appendix 'Cronica Series', unpaginated.

<sup>45</sup> Evelyn Philip Shirley, "An Inventory of the Effects of Henry Howard, K.G., Earl of Northampton, Taken on His Death in 1614, Together with a Transcript of His Will", *Archaeologica* 42, no. II (1869): 347-78, p.350.

## Chapter 8

### Signet rings: heritage and memory



Figure 8.1: Gold signet ring with a shield displaying three horseshoes on a bend, possibly the arms of Ferrers, Ferrier, Crispe (Kent), or Dethick; England; early-seventeenth century. British Museum, Prehistory & Europe AF.830.

The next type of ring to be considered in this thesis is exemplified by the British Museum gold signet ring illustrated above. It is engraved to the bezel with a shield bearing three horseshoes on a bend cotised, which is surrounded by a cabled border. The style of the ring is typical of those bearing heraldic devices that date to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. According to O.M. Dalton, these arms were used by the families of Ferrers, Ferrier, Crispe of Kent, and Dethick.<sup>1</sup> While it would be almost impossible to discover the precise identity of the ring's male owner from the object alone, when it was worn it served as a marker of his identity as a member of an established family granted permission to bear arms. The practical nature of a signet, used to seal and authenticate documents, made this an acceptable form of male jewellery that was emulated by men lower down the social scale, with examples of silver and base-metal and bearing non-armorial devices.

The signet ring was an important piece of jewellery within a man's possessions acting as a symbol of his personal identity and lineage, as well as of his role and authority. It described (and sometimes invented) a heritage that he could leave to others. Importantly, these objects were not the exclusive reserve of those to whom arms had been granted as the survival of examples without true heraldic devices indicates. Nor was the signet reserved for male use, as the surviving ring of Mary Stuart, queen of Scots (1542-1587) and other references in documentary sources demonstrate (fig.8.2).

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<sup>1</sup> O.M. Dalton, *Catalogue of the Finger Rings: Early Christian, Byzantine, Teutonic, Mediaeval and Later; Bequeathed by Sir Augustus Wollaston Franks, in Which Are Included the Other Rings of the Same Periods in the Museum* (London: printed by order of the Trustees, 1912), no.620.



Figure 8.2: Gold, enamel, and chalcedony signet ring engraved with the achievement of Mary Queen of Scots (also showing seal impression); possibly France; c.1548-1558. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1856,10-15.1.

The signet ring also links to ideas of social connections, through the roles and responsibilities of an individual that it could represent. Ultimately, the signet ring was a marker of identity in both its physical presence and in its absence, through the impression it left on a document.

Non-literate cultures have traditionally relied on images and symbols for communication. The signet is perhaps the most ancient of all these symbols used to authenticate documents and symbolise the ruler's authority. It appears to date back in areas of Western Asia to as early as 5000 BC.<sup>2</sup> The use of a signet on a ring can be traced back to Egyptian cultures as early as c.1800 BC, with the form of a scarab beetle constituting a rotating bezel engraved with pictorial devices representing the owner on the underside.<sup>3</sup> The use of rings for sealing purposes was common practice in ancient Rome, with the signet engraved onto semi-precious stone or metal bezels.<sup>4</sup> Although signet rings in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did not require literacy, they still demanded legibility. Whether the bezel of the ring bore a coat of arms, the mark of a merchant, or initial letters, the visual imagery (whether impressed on wax as a seal or shown as the matrix in reverse) had to be understood by both wearer and viewer for the object to function as intended.

Understanding visual imagery was important for an early modern citizen since signs and symbols were ubiquitous in this period. One example of this was the adoption of signs to identify houses, workspaces, and their occupants, prior to the implementation of house numbers in 1760. These signs served as mnemonic devices and needed to reflect the trade or

<sup>2</sup> Hugh Tait, ed., *7000 Years of Jewellery* (London: British Museum Press, reprinted 2008), p.229.

<sup>3</sup> Tait, ed., *7000 Years*, pp.229-30; Diana Scarisbrick, *Rings: Symbols of Wealth Power and Affection* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1993), p.9.

<sup>4</sup> Tait, ed., *7000 Years*, p.230.

occupation of the owner. So a glover may have used the sign of a hand and a glove, while a fishmonger may have adopted a dolphin or a salmon.<sup>5</sup> Change of ownership of premises required a change in name, though inns and taverns generally retained their names. That signs were synonymous with individuals is also made evident from the earliest goldsmiths' marks. A statute of 1363 (37 Edw.III c.7) decreed the use of a maker's mark to be placed onto all work produced by master goldsmiths.<sup>6</sup> Originally these took the form of a device, often the same as the premises of the goldsmith (fig.8.3).

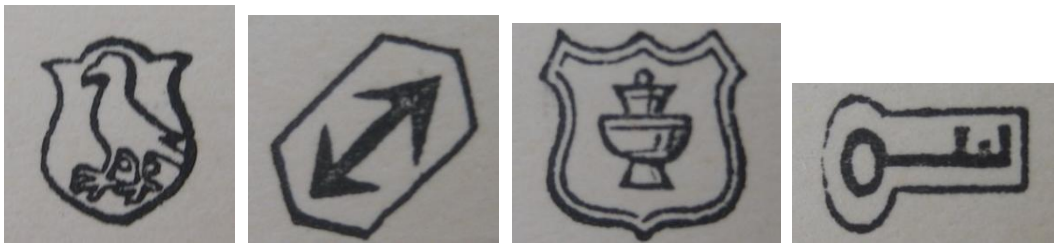


Figure 8.3: These are possibly the marks of Thomas Bampton, at the 'The Falcon' c.1567, John Harysson, at the 'Broad Arrow' in 1569, John Mabbe, of the 'Cuppe' in 1569, and Manasses Stockton of the 'Keye' in 1569.<sup>7</sup>

Later the use of initials became commonplace, though there was a period of overlap in the sixteenth century between the use of symbols and initial letters as makers' marks (fig.8.4).



Figure 8.4: Detail of maker's mark, Roman capital 'M' in an angular shield, stamped to the reverse of the bezel of a gold signet ring engraved with an image to the front of the bezel of a crowned armoured warrior brandishing a sword and riding a lion over two enemies lying on the ground; England; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe AF.814.

While the primary function of a signet ring was to seal the wax on documents and letters as a mark of authentication, it was the object that remained highly visible on a man's hand. The ring could prove functional even when not employed as a sealing device. In Thomas Heywood's early seventeenth-century play *If You Know Me Not, You Know Nobody*

<sup>5</sup> Kenneth Rogers, *Old Cheapside and Poultry: Ancient Houses and Signs* (London: Homeland Association, 1931), p.10.

<sup>6</sup> J.S. Forbes, *Hallmark: A History of the London Assay Office* (London: Unicorn Press, 1999), p.19.

<sup>7</sup> Taken from Wilfred Joseph Cripps, *Old English Plate. Ecclesiastical, Decorative, and Domestic: Its Makers and Marks* (London: John Murray, 1914), pp.419-22.

when the character of the London merchant Thomas Gresham sends his relative, John, to collect a payment, the production of Gresham's signet ring provides suitable guarantee for the legitimacy of the transaction.

Gresham: I was bethinking me whom I might send  
To fetch this hundred pound I am set to pay  
To Sir Thomas Ramsey.  
[...] Here, John, take this seal ring:  
Bid Timothy presently send me a hundred pound.

The potency of the sight of this object that bears the reverse coat of arms of Thomas Gresham provides enough surety for the character Timothy to hand money over to an individual he had never seen before.

John: [...] Here's his seal  
ring; I hope a warrant sufficient.

Timothy: Upon so good security, John, I'll fit me to deliver it. [...] Here John; accept my duty to my master.  
I must tell you, John, I would not have trusted you,  
John, without so sufficient a discharge.<sup>8</sup>

It is clear that without knowledge of Gresham's arms the signet ring would have had no impact on Timothy and the transaction would have not been completed. Therefore a seal ring could only be valid and function as intended when it was read correctly.

In defining a signet ring as a marker of a man's identity and authority, it becomes clear that such an object did not necessarily need to bear an armorial design that reflected a man's lineage. The image graven on the bezel only needed to be a visual or representative device of an individual, something that was enough to create a distinctive, identifiable sign. In addition to rings bearing heraldic imagery, signet rings could also display a para-heraldic device, a merchant mark, a rebus, or initials.<sup>9</sup> Prior to identifying the various forms that a signet ring could take, it is necessary to understand heraldry since many rings with non-heraldic devices attempt, in part, to make reference to this field. Rings that displayed imagery of the para-heraldic type only alluded to heraldry but this was done to add legitimacy to a

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<sup>8</sup> John Payne Collier, *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Heywood, with the Life of the Poet and remarks on his Writings*, 2 vols. (London: printed for the Shakespeare Society, 1851), vol.2, pp.87, 89.

<sup>9</sup> The term para-heraldry was coined and brought to my attention by Dr Clive Cheesman, Richmond Herald at the College of Arms, London, to whom I am grateful for discussing with me the main debates concerning heraldry, as well as for introducing me to the College of Arms' manuscript collection.



man's descent. This could in turn elevate a man's status socially and this was one means of defining his masculinity.

### 8.1 Heraldic devices

Coats of arms as devices of recognition began to appear in Western Europe around the twelfth century and developed from the need to identify knights on a battlefield. Slowly, the use of heraldry became more widespread and eventually became hereditary within lineages. Heraldry was not regulated until 1417 when the heralds were given the task of ensuring proper usage. Prior to this, a man could use any arms provided it was not used by another. With the sovereign demanding greater control, there were understandably those that did not agree with these new policies, sharing the views of Nicholas Upton that the arms granted by the heralds 'be of no more auctorite then thoos armys the wich be take by a mannys awne auctorite'.<sup>10</sup> This was perhaps also in response to the fact that such a ruling seemed to mark a shift to the use of arms by the nobility alone.

By the sixteenth century, then, coats of arms were strictly governed with regards to their composition and use (fig.8.5).

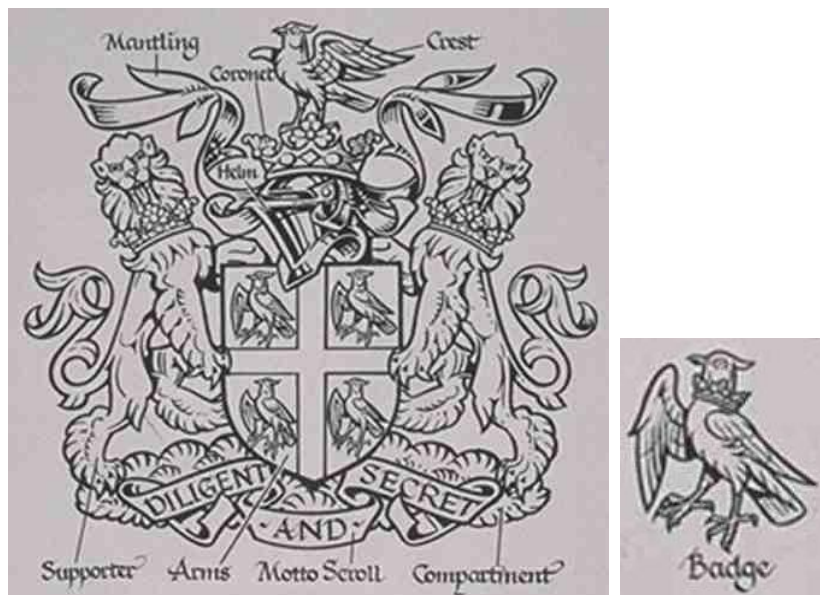


Figure 8.5: Full armorial achievement of arms of the College of Arms, London identifying the various components.<sup>11</sup> The arms, crest, and motto could be used independently.

<sup>10</sup> Translated in *The Boke of St Albans* (1486), British Library G.10547 cited in Richard Marks and Ann Payne, *British Heraldry from its Origins to c.1800* (London: British Museum Publications Ltd., 1978), p.13 and cat. no. 40.

<sup>11</sup> Taken from <http://college-of-arms.gov.uk/Achievement.htm> and accessed on 13 April 2010.

Crucially in the early modern period, it is almost impossible to determine an individual from a coat of arms alone, since these arms are markers of family lineage and not representative of a single person. When heraldic devices are present on a material object, often used to denote ownership, it is usually only possible to determine, in the first instance, the family entitled to bear those arms. When presented with an engraved gold signet ring, devoid of the armorial tinctures that are often the only distinguishing factor between similar arms, the task of identification is much harder. In order to attempt an identification of the individual who may have possessed the ring other evidence must be employed.

Within heraldry, an understanding of cadency marks can indicate as to the identification of particular family members. Marks of cadency (also known as differences or distinctions) are applied to a shield by each son according to his position within the family. The eldest son, and heir, is usually represented by the placing of a label with three tabs at the top, while a crescent moon denotes the second son and so this continues down the hereditary line. Complications with this system can arise. Upon the death of the father, it was customary for the eldest son to remove his label and adopt the arms of his father. It is doubtful whether this was enforced strictly, as it would involve changing any depictions of heraldry to reflect this new status as head of the family. Equally, while the crescent moon indicated a second son it could also be used to demonstrate that a family line had descended from a second son.<sup>12</sup>

As an example of just how difficult it can be establish ownership of a signet ring without the use of supplementary information is the signet ring of Sir Roger Wilbraham (1553-1616). Solicitor-General for Ireland in 1586 and, later, Master of the Court of Requests and Surveyor of the Court of Wards and Liveries, Wilbraham was the second son of his father Richard Wilbraham (1528-1612).<sup>13</sup> The signet ring associated with Roger and now in the British Museum comprises a gold hoop with crystal set into the bezel. The face of the bezel is engraved with the arms of Wilbraham in reverse and the tinctures have been applied in coloured foil behind the setting (fig.8.6). The reverse of the ring's bezel is engraved with the initials 'RW', which are separated by a figure-of-eight motif, and the motto 'Cominus quo minus' (fig.8.7).

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<sup>12</sup> See letter on object file for BM P&E 1927,2-16.57 dated 20 October 1986 to Iona Cairns of Sotheby's Bond Street from Patric L. Dickinson, Clarenceux King of Arms then Rouge Dragon Pursuivant, in which he states that 'it was often the case that a whole branch of a family descended from a second son would bear such a mark on their arms as a more or less permanent mark of difference'.

<sup>13</sup> John Burke, *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Commoners of Great Britain and Ireland, Enjoying Territorial Possessions or High Official Rank, but Uninvested with Heritable Honours* (London: Henry Colburn, 1834), vol. 1, p.317.



Figure 8.6: Gold and crystal signet ring engraved with the arms of Sir Roger Wilbraham; England; 1528-1611. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1927,2-16.57.



Figure 8.7: Detail of reverse of bezel of gold and crystal signet ring engraved with the arms of Sir Roger Wilbraham; England; 1528-1611. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1927,2-16.57.

Significantly, present on the uppermost part of the arms is the mark of distinction indicating a second son: a crescent moon. The same arms, with a crescent moon, and motto appear on an early seventeenth-century portrait of Roger Wilbraham, painted by the circle of Marcus Gheeraerts (1562-1635) (fig.8.8).



Figure 8.8: Sir Roger Wilbraham; circle of Marcus Gheeraerts; dated 1604. Private collection.<sup>14</sup>

The portrait is inscribed in the top right corner with a date of 1604 and gives the age of the sitter as fifty. It was exhibited at the South Kensington Museum (precursor to the Victoria and Albert Museum) in 1868 in a show called 'National Portrait Exhibition'. More recently, it was sold by the auction house Christie's at the London King Street sale rooms on 11 April 1997 as lot number 56 in sale number 5774, where it was purchased for a price of £5,980. This painting now resides in a private collection. The armorial components present on the portrait are identical to those that appear on the signet ring. Given that the sitter of the painting has been conclusively identified as Sir Roger Wilbraham, it is only logical to assume that the ring was the property of this same gentleman. With the arms representing the Wilbraham family, it is the incorporation of the mark of difference represented by the crescent moon that indicates a second son, who in this instance is Roger Wilbraham.<sup>15</sup>

Private correspondence held on the object file for the signet ring at the British Museum offers further information regarding ownership of the ring. Sections of the will of Roger's father, Richard Wilbraham, are recorded and these include a bequest to Roger. The will is dated 30 October 1611 and Richard leaves to his son Roger 'my second best goulde

<sup>14</sup> Taken from [http://www.christies.com/lotFinder/lot\\_details.aspx?intObjectID=184340](http://www.christies.com/lotFinder/lot_details.aspx?intObjectID=184340), accessed on 12 May 2010.

<sup>15</sup> The arms of the Wilbraham family are illustrated in Burke, *Genealogical and Heraldic History*, vol.1, p.315.

Ringe w[i]th a stone engraved in the same and in Coulo[rs] of Armes'.<sup>16</sup> This would seem an accurate description of the British Museum signet ring. In support of this identification, Richard was the second son of his father Ralph Wilbraham (d.1552) and so he too would have incorporated the crescent within his arms. A signet ring of plain gold with the same arms, but with the crescent centrally placed, and surmounted by the initials 'RW' in reverse was sold at the London sale rooms of the auction-house Sotheby's in 1986, where it was purchased by Nantwich Museum, Cheshire (fig.8.9).<sup>17</sup> It is thought to be the ring of Richard Wilbraham.



Figure 8.9: Gold signet ring of Richard Wilbraham; England; 1528-1611. Nantwich Museum, NANTW:2003.22.

The testamentary evidence also assists with securing a finite range for the date of the ring's production. This type of signet ring was fashionable within the sixteenth century, though they seem to have developed in the preceding century. The earliest record of such a signet is of that belonging to John II, Duke of Burgundy (1371-1419).<sup>18</sup> The latest date of production must be 1611, when it is mentioned in Richard's will. More research is needed on the motto that is present on the ring and portrait. If it was personal to Roger then the inscription to the reverse of the bezel was certainly a later addition made by Roger, perhaps

<sup>16</sup> In the object file for BM P&E 1927,2-16.57 is a letter dated 17 February 1987 from Susan Pritchard, former curator of Nantwich Museum, to Judy Rudoe of the British Museum with which is enclosed a copy of the will of Richard Wilbraham dated to 30 October 1611. A note on the first page of the transcription states that the will was transcribed at the Cheshire Record Office on 16 June 1986. The reference to the gold and crystal armorial signet ring appears on page 2 of the transcription.

<sup>17</sup> "Important Medieval Works of Art, Renaissance and Baroque Bronzes and Other European Sculptures", Sotheby's, London, 11 December 1986, lot 205. See letter on object file for BM P&E 1927,2-16.57 dated 17 February 1987 from Susan Pritchard, then Curator of Nantwich Museum, to Judy Rudoe, Curator in Prehistory and Europe, the British Museum in which she confirms the purchase of this gold signet ring.

<sup>18</sup> Charles Oman, *Catalogue of Rings in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1930; reprint, Ipswich: Anglia Publishing, 1993), p.11, though Oman notes that the bezel of this particular ring was set instead with a white sapphire – see Edmund Waterton, *Dactylitheca Watertoniana: a descriptive catalogue of the finger-rings in the collection of Mrs Waterton* [manuscript] (1866), no.249 currently in the National Art Library (Great Britain), Manuscript MSL/1879/1275; Diana Scarisbrick, *Rings: Jewelry of Power, Love and Loyalty* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2007), p31.

to identify the ring as his and not his father's. While the will provides documentary evidence to prove that this signet ring did indeed belong to Sir Roger Wilbraham, it unveils a longer history and actually places original ownership of this object with Richard Wilbraham.

The types of visual imagery placed on a signet ring are multiple, but ultimately all must be understood as devices that support recognition. The type of signet ring that is most commonly displayed within the context of museum displays is the sort that incorporates heraldry. Heavy-set rings of gold and engraved with a coat of arms or a crest are most frequently associated with the term 'signet ring' (figs.8.10-8.11).



Figure 8.10: Gold signet ring engraved with the reverse arms of Sir John Tirrell and inscribed above the shield 'IT' in reverse, surrounded by a cabled border and with foliate decoration to the shoulders; England; late-sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe AF.810.



Figure 8.11: Gold signet ring engraved with a shield depicting the arms of the Urswick family of Lincoln and Yorkshire enclosed within a cabled border; England; about 1600. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe AF.818.

The ring that has the arms of the Urswick family (fig.8.11) was previously in the collection of Richard Cornwallis Neville (1820-1861), fourth Baron Braybrooke. Within the



catalogue of rings from the Braybrooke collection the author, assumed to be Braybrooke, underscores the difficulty of identifying an owner from just the coat of arms alone.<sup>19</sup> Sir Charles George Young (1795-1869), Garter King of Arms from 1842, informed Braybrooke that the coat of arms represented the Urswick of Lincoln and Yorkshire. Of this family, there was a strong candidate to have been associated with the ring: the courtier Christopher Urswick (1448?-1522) who, amongst other positions he held, was Dean of Windsor from 1496 until 1505. Braybrooke enumerates a few of the most notable events within Urswick's life, which may have made the possession of a gold signet ring by him very likely. However, mindful of the difficulties concerning heraldry and in the absence of any supporting evidence, Braybrooke concludes the catalogue entry 'There is pleasure therefore in referring this ring to the possession of so eminent a man, though there is no other evidence than the arms it bears'.<sup>20</sup>

In the absence of a shield, an armorial signet ring may have featured the crest only (fig.8.12).



Figure 8.12: Gold signet ring with an oval shaped bezel engraved with a seated canine and enclosed within a cabled border; England; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe AF.809.

Two components within the engraved image of this sejant greyhound indicate that this signet ring shows a true heraldic device: the crescent moon debussing the body; and the crest wreath, on top of which the canine is seated. The crest wreath is a definitive sign that the image of the dog is the family crest, while the cadency mark represents the second son within the family lineage. The ring weighs forty-four grams and this is a substantial weight, especially when this is compared other types of ring. Many of the posy rings, which were

<sup>19</sup> Richard Cornwallis Neville (Lord Braybrooke), *Catalogue of Rings in the Collection of the Right Honourable Lord Braybrooke, Audley End* (S.I.: privately printed, 1873), no.1.

<sup>20</sup> Neville (Lord Braybrooke), *Catalogue of Rings*, no.1.

discussed in Chapter 6 above, weigh only two grams. Such a heavy-set ring therefore commanded authority when worn.<sup>21</sup> Presumably though, this assisted with understanding signets within the early modern period. When used to authenticate documents the physical impression left on the wax would have been larger and more prominent; and when present on a man's hand it was a visible sign of his identity, authority, and lineal descent.

Referred to above in the context of the Wilbraham ring, a type of armorial signet ring that developed in the fifteenth century seemed to gain in popularity during the sixteenth century. This took the form of a gold ring set in the bezel with a crystal, or other colourless semi-precious stone, onto which the arms were engraved in reverse. The heraldic colours were then either enamelled or placed on coloured foil behind the setting. A signet ring produced in such a manner allowed for the tinctures of the coat of arms to be represented. Since the colours remained on the surface behind the crystal face, the lustre of the original hue could be retained. Unfortunately, any cracks to the surface stone could cause degradation of the enamel or foil. A group of rings of this type, known as the Gresham grasshopper rings, is discussed in greater in detail at the end of this chapter.

This style of ring seems to have been favoured also in Germany and the Victoria and Albert Museum has examples dating to the second half of the sixteenth century.<sup>22</sup> Noted early modern men including Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556), Archbishop of Canterbury and Sir Nicholas Bacon (1510-1579), Lord Keeper of the Great Seal are depicted in portraits wearing signet rings of this type (figs.8.13-8.14). In 2005 a ring of the foiled crystal variety was sold by the auction house Bonhams (fig.8.15).<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Pictorial evidence seems to indicate that such rings were worn on the index finger but without written evidence to support this theory it is difficult to know whether this is merely convention of portraiture. See for example figs. 8.13 and 8.14 below.

<sup>22</sup> VAM M.219-1975 and VAM 736-1871.

<sup>23</sup> "Fine Jewellery", Bonhams, New Bond Street, 7 April 2005, sale 12061, lot 29, sale 12061.





Figure 8.13: Thomas Cranmer; Gerlach Flicke; 1545. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 535.



Figure 8.14: Sir Nicholas Bacon; unknown; 1579. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 164.



Figure 8.15: Gold and signet ring set with a foiled crystal intaglio bearing the arms of Sir Thomas Tyringham (d.1595); England; dated 1568. Location unknown.

This signet ring with the arms of Sir Thomas Tyringham (d.1595), sheriff of Bedford and Buckingham in 1560, is a remarkable survival since it is dated 1568 and the colours have retained their original vibrancy due to the crystal bezel remaining intact. As testament to its rarity, this piece sold for £15,600. Thomas Tyringham was second son of his father, also Thomas.<sup>24</sup> To mark his familial position heraldically, Thomas should have adopted the crescent moon within his arms. But this is not present on the ring. This absence is explained by the fact that following the death of the elder Thomas in 1526, the eldest son and heir Robert Tyringham was unable to accept his position as head of the family since he died as a minor in 1532.<sup>25</sup> The estate then transferred to Thomas, along with the right to use the original arms without the need to apply any marks of distinction.

A plain gold signet ring, devoid of its heraldic colours may have failed to communicate effectively and so a foiled ring bypassed such an issue. Furthermore, the materials and craftsmanship employed in the making of such a ring would have far surpassed the simplicity of an engraved gold ring. It is perhaps for these reasons that a ring of this type was favoured by a number of high-profile men within the early modern period: being representative of the dignity of their office and status. Additionally, since gold signet rings bearing non-heraldic devices were in use, the foiled examples remained the exclusive reserve of men granted a coat of arms.

<sup>24</sup> George Lipscomb, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Buckingham* (London: J&W Robins, 1847), vol. 1, p.519.

<sup>25</sup> William Page, ed., *The Victoria History of the Counties of England. Volume 4 Buckinghamshire* (London: St. Catherine Press, 1927). Accessed from British History Online on 22 May 2012 – "Parishes : Tyringham with Filgrave," A History of the County of Buckingham: Volume 4, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=62619>.

## 8.2 Non-armorial signet rings

In addition to rings bearing armorial imagery, there are those signets that allude to heraldry, a feature known as para-heraldry. Behind para-heraldry lay the belief that the actual content of a coat of arms was not important; rather it was the presence of an image that aligned itself to such a marker of nobility. The identification of a signet ring bearing a para-heraldic image demands an understanding of heraldry. The ring with the seated greyhound discussed above was marked with clear indicators of true heraldry: the crest wreath and the cadency mark. Para-heraldic devices make close reference to true heraldry and are often confused with a representation of the badge or crest of a coat of arms. According to Clive Cheesman, Richmond Herald at the College of Arms in London, subtle signifiers could indicate this practice of para-heraldry.<sup>26</sup> The inclusion of initial letters within the shield might suggest an attempt to assimilate heraldry, though as is customary when working with material objects, this is not a hard and fast rule. Where no shield is present, an armorial signet would depict the crest. A signet ring with a para-heraldic symbol would attempt to replicate this and the lack of a crest wreath would highlight this attempt (fig.8.16).



Figure 8.16: Gold signet ring engraved with a ship and the initials 'RH' in reverse, and inscribed to the reverse of the bezel in italics 'A freinds guift' and stamped with a maker's mark of a capital 'R' within a circular punch; early-seventeenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1928,5-7.1.

This ring engraved with a ship is therefore unlikely to show a true heraldic symbol, since the initial letters have been placed within the image and there is clear absence of a shield or a crest wreath. A cabled border has been added to allude further to those signet rings with genuine armorial devices. Given that this was a period in which the visual was so crucial to the identification of an individual, as attested to by the use of maker's marks or the signs of shops and inns, it is very likely that this ring was associated with a man connected to sea

<sup>26</sup> Meeting at the College of Arms, London on 27 January 2010.

trade or the docks. Such a supposition is strengthened by the fact that when it was discovered in 1921, it was located fourteen feet below the surface at London Bridge.

The use of a signet ring engraved with an image of this type then raises questions of whether para-heraldry was ever used to deceive intentionally. It is more likely that signet rings were engraved with the visual device most associated with an individual, whether armorial or not. The use of a beaded or cabled border was perhaps nothing more than convention. The choice of gold as a material was reserved for those who could afford this precious metal, regardless of whether they were permitted to bear arms. So the ship ring was probably not trying to make any attempt at heraldry, rather it simply reflected how Master R.H. chose to represent himself to his contemporaries. The inscription to the reverse of the bezel 'A freinds guift' is a potent reminder that in this period the reciprocal culture of gift-giving was rife. Since a signet ring was presumably worn daily to conduct business transactions, the owner of this ring would have had a constant reminder of the gift he had received and for which favours undoubtedly needed to be returned.

Another common type of signet ring consists of those which bear only initial letters to the bezels. Often these letters are joined by a tasselled knot (fig.8.17).



Figure 8.17: Gold signet ring with a flat oval bezel inscribed with the monogram TW in reverse joined by a tasselled knot with foliate decoration; England; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe AF.798.

Clearly a ring of this type is a non-armorial signet in a very simple form. It may be that such rings were adopted by those who were permitted to bear heraldic devices, as a means of personal identification. A signet ring engraved to the front of the bezel with the initial letters H and M has traditionally been thought to have been a betrothal gift to Henry Stewart (1545/6-1567), Lord Darnley from Mary Stuart before their marriage in 1565 (VAM 841-1871).<sup>27</sup> The letters stand for their names of Mary and Henry and these are joined by a true

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<sup>27</sup> This is on display at the V&A in Room 91 (Jewellery Gallery), case 9, shelf A, box 3. See Diana Scarisbrick, *Jewellery in Britain 1066-1837: A Documentary, Social, Literary and Artistic Survey* (Norwich: Michael

lover's knot.<sup>28</sup> The reverse of the bezel is engraved with the royal arms of Scotland and the inside of the hoop bears the inscription 'Henry L. Darley 1565', though these are now thought to be nineteenth-century additions. Consequently, the authenticity of this ring is now unclear.<sup>29</sup> It is difficult to ascertain ownership of a ring of this type, though it is likely that it was used by individuals of varying social classes for whom a ring made of gold was a legitimate purchase.

Another type of non-armorial signet was the use of a rebus to represent the name of the individual more literally. So a gold signet ring in the British Museum engraved with the image of a cluster of hops above a tun (cask) was once the property of a man with the surname Hopton (BM P&E AF.787). The motif comprising a hare in a sun was adopted by the author of *The Description of England* William Harrison. More obscure visual imagery symbolising an individual is found within merchant marks.

The marks of merchants appear on many extant rings and such objects can also be called signet rings, since the image engraved on the bezel is a visual symbol representing the identity and authority of the owner. Such rings functioned in a way that was no different to an armorial signet. Ownership is difficult to determine since there is no comprehensive record or database of merchant marks and the men who used them. Nevertheless contemporaries would have recognised and understood these symbols. While it is not usual to find armorial signets made of a material other than gold, rings with merchants' marks exist in a range of materials, including base metals (fig.8.18). This reflects their frequent use in business transactions and the overriding need for functionality over ornament.



Figure 8.18: Bronze signet ring with an octagonal bezel engraved with a merchant's mark and the initials 'G i f o'; England; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1904,4-20.3.

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Russell, 1994), p.150; Oman, *Catalogue of Rings*, no. 559 and pl.24; and Charles Oman, *British Rings 800-1914* (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd, 1974), pl.45A&D, p.105.

<sup>28</sup> Scarisbrick, *Rings* (2007), p.39.

<sup>29</sup> See object record on V&A's Search the Collection: <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O62552/the-darnley-ring-ring-unknown/> accessed 22 June 2012.

This does not exclude the possibility of a merchant's signet being made of gold. These rings were worn daily to assist with business transactions and to stand as a mark of authority. Therefore it would not be unreasonable to assume that an individual would commission a ring of the finest material that he could afford. This would further enhance his reputation as a successful merchant. A particularly fine example of a signet has a swivelled bezel, which reveals that the underside has been engraved and enamelled with a *memento mori* device: a white enamelled skull (fig.8.19). It is very plausible that this ring was worn by a merchant as a reminder of the transience of life and the futility of worldly goods. This is further support by the inscription engraved on the upper side of the bezel, which reads 'MORS BONIS GRATA' ('Death is pleasing to the good').

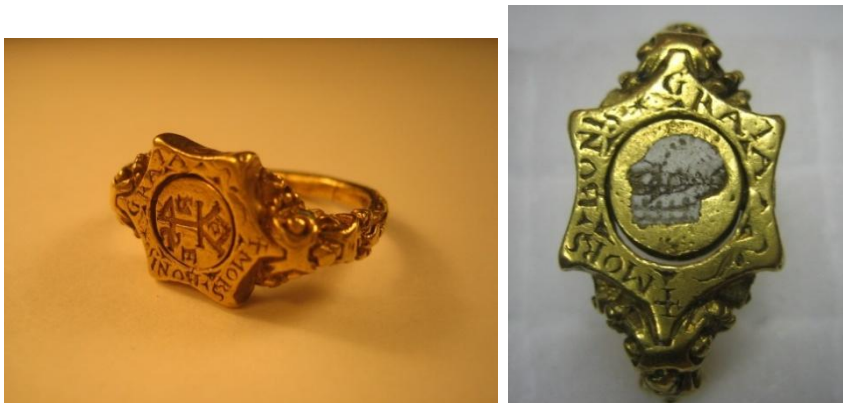


Figure 8.19: Gold signet and *memento mori* ring with hexagonal-shaped bezel of curvilinear sides containing an oval plate on a swivel mechanism. One side of the plate is engraved with a white enamelled skull; the other has engraved a merchant's mark and a monogram, 'RE'. The bezel is inscribed in Roman capitals '+ MORS BONIS \* GRATA'; England; seventeenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1871,3-2.5.

Although only weighing nineteen grams, the craftsmanship employed in its creation (from the bezel to the chased arabesque and scrollwork shoulders) would suffice to impress any person looking upon the object, as the owner conducted his business.

The varied types of signet ring underscore that the purpose of a signet remained the clear identification of an individual in a period when an understanding of visual imagery was much stronger than today. Early modern citizens were well versed on the meanings of signs and symbols: they could recognise armorials, non-heraldic devices, and merchants' marks. Whether or not a ring bore a legitimate heraldic device was not a concern, what mattered more was its legibility to others.

There is sufficient evidence in support of the fact that signet rings were used by a broad spread of the population in the early modern period. In terms of extant physical



material, rings that are engraved with non-armorial imagery indicate usage by men other than those that were granted arms. This in itself is suggestive of ownership amongst the non-elite. Additionally, signet rings made of less costly materials than gold are proof that men from varied social levels engaged with this form of material culture. The need for a signet ring, while important in an official capacity for the authenticating of documents, was perhaps more common as a symbol of a man's identity and his masculinity.

### 8.3 Avoiding fraud

The issue of fraud is one that must not be omitted from a discussion of signet rings, particularly since the emphasis of this section is on how such objects were indicative of a man's identity and authority. The seriousness and potential implications of access to such a personal object are aptly demonstrated by practice associated with the Ring of the Fisherman. This ring, belonging to the incumbent Pope, by tradition bears an image of St Peter fishing from a boat. Until the mid-nineteenth century the Fisherman's Ring served as a signet for authenticating personal correspondence and papal briefs, since which date a stamp and red ink have been used. The ring is now more symbolic. On the death of a Pope the ring was ceremonially destroyed, to avoid the circulation of fraudulent documents. Prior to the election of a new Pope in 2005 the Roman goldsmith Claudio Franchi was asked to design a Fisherman's Ring. Franchi designed and made two rings: one that was more fluid and modern in its interpretation of the subject matter; the other more traditional in its execution (fig.8.20).



Figure 8.20: Modern (left) and classic (right) versions of the Fisherman's Ring create for Pope Benedict XVI; Claudio Franchi; Italy; 2005.

A similar practice of destruction occurred with the Great Seal of England. In his journal entry for 19 July 1603, following the accession of James I, Roger Wilbraham records

how the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, Sir Thomas Egerton (1540-1617), was entrusted with delivering a new Great Seal ‘& had the old defaced & cutt in peces by the king himself’.<sup>30</sup> This took place in the presence of the council. This symbolic act of destroying the old seal was significant, since it marked a transition in the authority of the Crown: from Elizabeth to James.

That fraudulent behaviour with regards to armorial devices may have been carried out can be extrapolated from a letters patent appointing Edward Pike as deputy herald of Exeter and Devon in 1688.<sup>31</sup> Dated 14 August and signed and sealed by Sir Henry St George, Clarenceux King of Arms, this letters patent refers to one of the duties to be undertaken by Pike.

Moreover to prohibit forbid and straitly command That no/ Painter Glazier Goldsmith Graver or any other Artificer whatsoever he or they be within the said Province shall take upon them to paint grave glaze carve cut devise or set forth by any ways/ or means any manner of Arms Crests Cognizances Pedigrees or other Devices appertaining to the Office of Arms, or in any other manner or form than they may lawfully do and shall be allow’d/ by me the said Clarenceux.<sup>32</sup>

It is highly significant that the heralds were concerned with regulating the practice of craftsmen, including goldsmiths, with regards to the depiction of heraldic devices. That such an issue was raised within the document suggests that malpractice within this field was carried out. It would seem that the heralds were concerned over the creation of fake pedigrees, which was not uncommon in the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries.<sup>33</sup>

In addition to the creation of incorrect arms on a variety of material goods and thinking back to the above-cited section from Thomas Heywood’s play, deception could have been carried out by the presentation of a signet that belonged to another. A simple search on the online database, British History Online, reveals that signet rings were often stolen. While there is no evidence to suggest that the specific target of the theft was the signet ring, the very fact that an individual could be despoiled of a jewel that represented his identity and authority was potentially worrying. When Robert Boothe was robbed of a number of goods as he

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<sup>30</sup> Roger Wilbraham, *The Journal of Sir Roger Wilbraham, Solicitor-General in Ireland and Master of Requests, for the Years 1593-1616. Together with Notes in Another Hand for the Years 1642-1649*, edited by Harold Spencer Scott (London: for the Royal Historical Society, 1902), p.61.

<sup>31</sup> Adrian Ailes, "Letters Patent Appointing Edward Pike Deputy Herald for Devon, 1688", *The Coat of Arms*, third series, vol.II part 2, no. 212 (Autumn 2006): 103-06.

<sup>32</sup> Ailes, "Letters Patent", pp.105-06.

<sup>33</sup> Richard Cust, "Sir Henry Spelman Investigates", *The Coat of Arms*, third series, vol. III, part 1, no. 213 (Spring 2007): 25-34.



travelled in Shoreditch in 1606, it is unlikely that the four men responsible, John Jeffery, George Coke, Robert Pleasington, and John Riccard, intended to take the ‘silver seal called “A Seall of Armes”’. Given the relatively high value of the remainder of the goods, which included bonds worth five hundred pounds, the seal, priced at 2s. 6d., was of little intrinsic value.<sup>34</sup> Its true worth lay in its symbolic and representational meaning to Boothe.

The first part of this chapter has focused on the different types of imagery that could embellish the bezel of a signet ring. The survival of rings with non-armorial devices provides strong evidence in support of the hypothesis that signet rings were not the exclusive reserve of elite society in the early modern period. Furthermore, extant rings made of non-precious metals are indicative of lower class usage. The importance of a signet ring as a marker of a man’s individual identity and his authority in this period is made clear by understanding the importance of visual devices. The next part of this chapter examines three extant sealing devices with varied heraldic imagery belonging to a single man: the courtier Sir Thomas Smith (1513-1577).

#### **8.4 Sir Thomas Smith and his signet rings**

Sir Thomas Smith who, amongst other offices, held the position of Principal Secretary under Edward VI (r.1547-1553) and Elizabeth I (r.1558-1603) has been attributed with the authorship of a work published in England in 1581, though believed to have been written much earlier.<sup>35</sup> *Discourse on the Commonweal of England* (1549) was written in response to the contemporary economic situation in England, most notably ‘severe inflation’. By the 1580s prices of goods were valued at 3.5 times that of levels in 1500, while by 1600 this figure had risen to 5.5 times higher.<sup>36</sup> The ‘commonweal’ of the title makes reference to the common good prevailing over private and personal interests. The narrative is in the form of a discourse that ensues between five speakers. The character of the Doctor is likely to have been modelled on Smith, since they share similar attitudes particularly in regards to ‘extravagance of clothing and the maintenance of luxurious establishments’.<sup>37</sup> Thus, this work is somewhat revelatory about Smith and his beliefs.

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<sup>34</sup> 22 December, 4 James I, ‘Middlesex Sessions Rolls: 1606’, *Middlesex county records: Volume 2: 1603-25* (1887), pp. 15-25. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=65982> Date accessed: 27 April 2010.

<sup>35</sup> Sir Thomas Smith (attrib.), *A Discourse of the Commonweal of This Realm of England*, edited by Mary Dewar (Charlottesville: published for the Folger Shakespeare Library by the University Press of Virginia, 1969), xix.

<sup>36</sup> Smith, *Discourse*, ix.

<sup>37</sup> Smith, *Discourse*, xxiii.

He advocates supporting domestic production over the importation of foreign goods, which placed unnecessary pressure on the nation's coffers.

What number first of trifles comes hither from beyond the seas that we might either clean spare or else make them within our realm, for the which we either pay inestimable treasure every year or else exchange substantial wares and necessary for them, for the which we might receive great treasure? Of the which sort I mean glasses as well looking as drinking as to glass windows, dials, tables, cards, balls, puppets, penhorns, inkhorns, toothpicks, gloves, knives, daggers, owches, brooches, aglets, buttons of silk and silver, earthen pots, pins, points, hawks' bells, paper both white and brown, and a thousand like things that might either be clean spared or else made within the realm sufficient for us.<sup>38</sup>

When questioned by the character of the Knight about what measures should be taken – 'You would have a law made that no such ware should be brought from beyond the sea to be sold here of such things as could be made here as well as there?' – the Doctor (and by extension Smith) is unequivocal in his response: 'Yea, forsooth, so I would wish'.<sup>39</sup>

Smith's thoughts, as expressed through his mouthpiece the Doctor, with regards to luxury items and excessive opulence is made explicit in his diatribes against the influx of foreign wares. In the second dialogue, the Doctor underscores the superfluous nature of 'wines, spices, linen, cloth, silks, and collars' by stating that 'though we might live so-so without them, yet far from any civility should it be'.<sup>40</sup> Later, the Doctor bemoans again the need to import items from abroad, such as perfumed gloves, glasses, cherries, and oranges, since he saw them as 'more to serve pleasure than necessity'.<sup>41</sup> These glimpses into Smith's beliefs on luxury goods are perhaps not altogether unsurprising, particularly if the *Discourse* was written in 1549 at a time when Smith was Principal Secretary and therefore involved with the finances of the nation. What is surprising, however, is that someone as vocal as Smith with regards to issues of wasteful and conspicuous consumption did not find it inappropriate to own at least three sealing devices made of precious and semi-precious materials.

The set of seals in the collections of the British Museum comprise two personal hand-held silver and ivory seal-dies and a gold and rock crystal signet ring (figs.8.21-8.23).

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<sup>38</sup> Smith, *Discourse*, pp.63-64.

<sup>39</sup> Smith, *Discourse*, p.67.

<sup>40</sup> Smith, *Discourse*, p.62.

<sup>41</sup> Smith, *Discourse*, p.68.



Figure 8.21: Silver seal with an ivory handle, the matrix bearing the shield, scrolling mantle, helm and crest of Sir Thomas Smith, and the handle having a posthumous inscription 'Sigillum Thomasi Smyth Equites aurati Hill Hall Co. Essex AD 1585'; England; c.1572-1573. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1982.7-1.1.



Figure 8.22: Silver seal with ivory handle, the matrix engraved with the flaming salamander crest of Sir Thomas Smith and encircled by the inscription 'QUA POTE LUCET'; England; c.1572-1573. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1982.7-1.2.



Figure 8.23: Gold signet ring with rock crystal bezel engraved with the arms of Sir Thomas Smith and below in foiled tinctures; England; c.1572-1573. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1982.7-1.3.

These three objects demonstrate the various types of armorial imagery that could be depicted on a signet: a coat of arms; a crest and motto; and shield, mantle, crest, and helm. Despite

visual differences, each of these seal matrices could be employed for the purposes of authenticating a document. Each of these objects then could legitimately singly represent Smith's authority and identity. It is unclear why there was a need for two personal hand-held desk seals but it is possible that their use depended on the formality of the document to be sealed. Perhaps the crest alone was sufficient for personal and informal correspondence, while greater armorial detail was required in more formal circumstances. Thus these two objects were considered by Smith to be constitutive of elite status and administrative responsibilities, and not conspicuous signs of luxury.

The signet ring served its purpose when Smith was not seated at his desk. It is a large heavy-set gold ring with a near-circular bezel, the dimensions of which are 25 x 23 mm. The bezel is set with rock crystal onto which Smith's shield has been engraved in reverse, with a centrally-placed crescent to show that he was second son of his father John Smith (d.1557). Underneath the stone the colours of the arms have been either painted on foil or enamelled, so that the tinctures show through. The portability of the ring meant that it was seen by numerous people, as Smith wore it on his person to conduct his daily affairs. Significantly, the silver matrices of the desk seals would have unlikely to be seen by many individuals, since the form of such an object dictated that it would stand upright on this surface. All that was discernible of these objects was their ivory handles and the impression left in wax. Therefore, the only signet that was fully visible was the ring.

That Smith chose his ring to be of the foiled rock crystal variety, rather than a solid gold ring, may be indicative of his predilection for the latest fashions even with an object that had a real functional and practical use. Given the higher status of this type of signet ring, Smith may have also deemed such an object to be more suited to the privileges of his office, along with other of his contemporaries such as Bacon (see fig.8.14). It is to be hoped that the materials used in the manufacture of Smith's three seals were all recycled and that no importation of goods from overseas was involved in their creation, for Smith would have sacrificed the principles raised his *Discourse* all for the sake of luxury.

## **8.5 The Gresham grasshopper rings**

While heraldic specialists have long recognised the importance of signet rings for indicating family and authority, they have rarely considered how the objects also indicated a community. This final part centres on a group of rings which, despite being owned by different men, can all be associated with the London merchant Sir Thomas Gresham (c.1518-1579). For all these examples of a ring with an engraved crystal bezel surmounting painted

foil or enamelled tinctures of the coat of arms have engraved to the reverse of their bezels the image of a grasshopper.

The grasshopper was the crest of the Gresham family, chosen presumably since it is a rebus of the name in Anglo Saxon, 'graes ham'.<sup>42</sup> That the sign of the grasshopper was adopted by Thomas Gresham is supported by the fact that he sealed his will with this crest; the Royal Exchange, which he founded in 1565 as a meeting place for merchants and opened in 1571 by Elizabeth I, was carved with grasshoppers; and his tomb, at St Helen's Bishopsgate in London, is adorned with his arms, including the grasshopper crest.<sup>43</sup> Gresham's London residence at 68 Lombard Street was converted into business premises in the early 1560s when his household moved into Gresham House on Bishopsgate Street.<sup>44</sup> Gresham seems to have operated under the sign of the grasshopper here. Today a sign of a golden grasshopper with the date of 1563 and the initials of Gresham hangs outside these premises in commemoration of this Tudor gentleman.

Until my recent rediscovery as part of my dissertation research, only five Gresham grasshopper rings had been referenced in jewellery studies as a homogenous group.<sup>45</sup> Of these five, three are in the collections of national museums and the remaining two are in private ownership. The ring of Sir William Fleetwood (c.1525-1594), recorder of London from 1571 to 1591, has been in the British Museum since 1897 (Prehistory and Europe AF.636). It was bequeathed by the collector and former Keeper of the department of British and Medieval Antiquities, Sir Augustus Wollaston Franks (1826-1897). The ring displaying the full armorial achievement of the prominent military engineer and architect Sir Richard Lee (1501/2-1575) came to the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1928 (M.249-1928).

The third publicly-owned ring is the ring of Gabriel Goodman (1528-1601), Dean of Westminster. This is held by St Fagans: National History Museum, Cardiff (30.236.2), along with two other gold rings with inscriptions that belonged to the Goodman family. These three rings and three paintings of members of the same family were bequeathed to National

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<sup>42</sup> *Princely Magnificence: Court Jewels of the Renaissance, 1500-1630* (London: Debrett's Peerage Ltd, 1980), no.30.

<sup>43</sup> George Chandler, *Four Centuries of Banking as Illustrated by the Bankers, Customers and Staff Associated with the Constituent Banks of Martins Bank Limited*, 2 vols. (London: B. T. Batsford Ltd, 1964; 1968), vol.1, p.23.

<sup>44</sup> Ian Blanchard, "Gresham, Sir Thomas (C.1518-1579)" in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. Online ed., edited by Lawrence Goldman, January 2008 - <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11505> accessed 10 July 2012).

<sup>45</sup> Scarisbrick, *Rings* (1993), p.48; Scarisbrick, *Jewellery in Britain*, p.150. In *Rings* (1993), Scarisbrick does mention a recent discovery of a foiled crystal signet of Sir William Feilding (will proved on 29 November 1547 – see The National Archives PROB 11/31/697) though it is not clear if this is also engraved to the reverse with a grasshopper. She makes no mention of it in subsequent publications or in personal correspondence dated 15 February 2012.

Museum Wales in 1930 by the Honourable Mrs Lawrence Brodrick, to whom they had descended.<sup>46</sup> The grasshopper ring is listed amongst the items bequeathed in Goodman's will dated 2 March 1600 – 'a ring of gold w[i]th mine armes ingraven & a grasshopp thereon' – though unfortunately he does not explain how he came to own this ring.<sup>47</sup> He left this ring to his nephew, Gabriel, eldest son of his late brother Godfrey and his wife Jane Theeloall.

A ring that was formerly owned by the collector Thomas Whitcombe Greene (1842-1932) and is now privately owned was identified by Hemp as being that of Jacques Wingfield (c.1519-1587). The arms bear a mullet, the cadency mark of a third son. Further, a 'sun in splendour' is another difference that appears on the arms and crest. Hemp recognised this as being present on the Garter plate of the diplomat Sir Richard Wingfield (b. in or before 1469; d.1525), asserting that this was not used by any other branch of the family. Thus he concludes that as the third son of Sir Richard and his second wife Bridget (d.1533/4), Jacques Wingfield, Master of the Ordnance in Ireland, must have been the owner of this grasshopper ring.<sup>48</sup> The ring was last sold at Christie's London on 19 December 1977 where it achieved a final bid price of £7500.<sup>49</sup> More recently it has been published by the jewellery historian Diana Scarisbrick along with another ring in private hands, that of Sir Robert Taylor.<sup>50</sup> The latter was exhibited at the Victoria and Albert Museum in the early 1980s in the exhibition 'Princely Magnificence' and appears in the catalogue published to coincide with this.<sup>51</sup>

In the sale catalogue for the Wingfield ring there is mention of a further two rings: those with the arms of the Woodhouse and Tremayne families, stating that the former was presented to the Society of Antiquaries of London in 1742.<sup>52</sup> The *Princely Magnificence* catalogue entry for the Taylor ring references this ring, though not by name. It states that 'In 1740 the Society of Antiquaries was shown a grasshopper ring dated 1557 which had been

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<sup>46</sup> The bequest comprises a plain gold ring inscribed 'C.G. Concordia fratrum 4. Ja 1583' (30.236.3), a plain gold ring inscribed 'God increase our love' (30.236.4), and portraits of Edward Goodman (1476-1560) (NMW A 3450), Godfrey Goodman (1583-1656) (NMW A 3452), and Gawen Goodman (1526-1604) (NMW A 3453) - private correspondence with Elen Phillips, Curator: Costume & Textiles at St Fagans: National History Museum, Cardiff on 14 February 2012. For a discussion of how the rings became the property of the Hon. Mrs Lawrence Brodrick, see W.J. Hemp, "The Goodman and Other Grasshopper Rings", *The Antiquaries Journal*, 5, (1925): 403-408, pp.404-05.

<sup>47</sup> Hemp, "The Goodman and other grasshopper rings", p.404.

<sup>48</sup> Hemp, "The Goodman and other grasshopper rings", p.406.

<sup>49</sup> "Fine Renaissance Bronzes and Works of Art", Christie's, King Street, London, 19 December 1977, lot 1, colour frontispiece and plate 1.

<sup>50</sup> Scarisbrick, *Rings*, (1993), p.48. The Taylor ring was sold at "Fine Sculpture and Works of Art", Christie's, London, 9 May 1978, lot 1. It is mentioned in Scarisbrick, *Rings*, (1993), p.48 and later illustrated in Diana Scarisbrick, *Tudor and Jacobean Jewellery* (London: Tate Publishing, 1995), p.33.

<sup>51</sup> *Princely Magnificence*, no.30.

<sup>52</sup> "Fine Renaissance Bronzes and Works of Art", Christie's, 1977, lot.1.

found on the Gresham estate in Suffolk'.<sup>53</sup> In fact, according to the minutes for the Antiquarian Society of London it would seem that the ring was shown at a meeting on 23 September 1742.

Mr West shewed a seal gold ring weighing better than half an ounce found in the Gresham estate in Budsale in Suffolk the Arms were cut in Christtal over the arms above the shield is 1557. the ground is foyl underneath bearing the Colours of the seild quarterly Ermine or a Lyons Face, a Crescent in the centre – a Grasshopper is Engravd on the inside of it.<sup>54</sup>

Following the entry a sketch of the ring lying on its side has been drawn, clearly showing the date of 1557. Unfortunately, there are no further references to this ring that allow for its current whereabouts to be discovered.

The same Christie's sale catalogue notes that the Tremayne ring was then in the possession of Martin's Bank, prior to which it was owned by the collector and benefactor to the V&A Walter Hildburgh (1876-1955).<sup>55</sup> Scarisbrick was aware of this ring's existence but she believed it to be untraceable following its presentation at a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries in 1930.<sup>56</sup> Further, while it is included in a 1999 article appearing in two subsequent issues of the Wingfield Family Society Newsletter, much of the information regarding the grasshopper rings seems to have been lifted directly from the earlier Christie's sale catalogue or the Hemp article.<sup>57</sup> It seems as if this particular ring has been forgotten by writers on jewellery.

Yet the Tremayne ring should not have escaped the notice of historians of jewellery, for it was exhibited in London alongside the Goodman and Wingfield rings in 1933.<sup>58</sup> Notes added by hand to the British Museum's copy of the Hemp article reference this exhibition, providing catalogue numbers for the two illustrated rings. A final appendage to the end of the

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<sup>53</sup> *Princely Magnificence*, no.30.

<sup>54</sup> "Minutes of the Society of Antiquaries: 1717-1751 with a List of Members to 1758, and of Purchases and Donations to 1753", vol.1. British Library, Egerton MS 1041, f.274r, p.503.

<sup>55</sup> "Fine Renaissance Bronzes and Works of Art", Christie's, 1977, lot.1. At the sale of the Taylor ring the following year, the same information on the Tremayne ring is given – "Fine Sculpture and Works of Art", Christie's, 1978, lot 1.

<sup>56</sup> "Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries", *The Antiquaries Journal*, X, no.3 (July, 1930): 303-314, p.304 cited in Diana Scarisbrick, "Sir Thomas Gresham and the Grasshopper Rings" in *The Royal Exchange*, edited by Ann Saunders, 57-58 (London: London Topographical Society, 1997), p.57.

<sup>57</sup> Jocelyn R. Wingfield, "16th Century Golden Grasshopper Rings. Who Owned Them and Why? Part 1", *Wingfield Family Society Newsletter* (Spring, 1999), vol. XIII, no.2, pp.11,20; Jocelyn R. Wingfield, "16th Century Golden Grasshopper Rings. Who Owned Them and Why? Part 2", *Wingfield Family Society Newsletter* (Summer, 1999), vol. XIII, no.3, pp.29-30.

<sup>58</sup> "A Loan Exhibition Depicting the Reign of Queen Elizabeth", edited by SW1 22 & 23 Grosvenor Place (London: In aid of the Young Women's Christian Association. Patron: HM the Queen, 1933), nos. 477- 479.

article states that 'A ring with foiled crystal, arms & ED, and grasshopper exh[ibite]d anonymously at Eliz 'Exh' London, 1933, Cat. no. 478'.<sup>59</sup> But far from this being an additional grasshopper ring, this is, in fact, the Tremayne ring. The initials have been engraved in a stylised way and so when exhibited in 1933 and published in the associated catalogue the 'T' was mistaken for a 'D'.<sup>60</sup>

My research for this thesis has led to the rediscovery of the Tremayne ring and it is appropriate that it is reintegrated fully into the story of the Gresham grasshopper rings. At the time of the 1977 Christie's sale, Martin's Bank no longer existed following an amalgamation with Barclays Bank plc in 1969. It is possible that information provided for the sale was taken from the first volume of George Chandler's history of Martin's Bank, which was published in 1964. He refers to the opening of the Royal Exchange and states that Gresham may have commissioned rings to be presented to certain individuals to commemorate this event.<sup>61</sup> This proposition was first suggested by Hemp nearly forty years earlier and although he acknowledges that this is 'mere conjecture', such a view seems to have been accepted until the publication of the catalogue for the V&A exhibition, *Princely Magnificence*.<sup>62</sup>

Chandler writes that 'One of the rings has been acquired by the Grasshopper and is on exhibition in its banking hall'.<sup>63</sup> The 'Grasshopper' referred to by Chandler is the premises once occupied by Gresham at 68 Lombard Street. This became the site of the principal London office of Martin's Bank, which was the first national bank to be based outside London. 68 Lombard Street was closed in 1981 and it is possible that the ring continued to be displayed there until this time. Following this closure, all archival material and artefacts were transferred to 54 Lombard Street. From here, all material was then moved to the Barclays Group Archive in Manchester in 1990. The ring was amongst the objects and is now within this archive, which also contains papers that relate to its acquisition in 1947.<sup>64</sup>

A memorandum written on 18 June 1947 and read at a meeting of the London Board of Martin's Bank on 20 June 1947 discusses the offer of a signet ring to the bank.

The bank has been offered a signet ring for £60 by a Mr. Hildburgh of 8, Elvaston Place, who is a collector of antique rings.

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<sup>59</sup> Annotations to Hemp, "The Goodman and other grasshopper rings", p.408.

<sup>60</sup> "A Loan Exhibition", no.478.

<sup>61</sup> Chandler, *Four Centuries*, vol.1, p.40.

<sup>62</sup> Hemp, "The Goodman and other grasshopper rings", p.407; *Princely Magnificence*, no.30.

<sup>63</sup> Chandler, *Four Centuries*, vol.1, pp.40-41.

<sup>64</sup> Information on the movements of the archive from personal correspondence with Maria Sienkiewicz, Group Archivist, Barclays Group Archives on 16 March 2012.



It is a heavy gold ring with a coat of arms engraved on a crystal bezel. On the inner side of the ring there is a grasshopper which shows signs of having been originally engraved with green enamel.<sup>65</sup>

It is noted further that according to the College of Arms and the Victoria and Albert Museum, where it had been exhibited for a short time, the arms engraved on the face of the bezel are those of Edmund Tremayne, Clerk of the Privy Council under Elizabeth I, whose will was proved on 3 December 1582.<sup>66</sup> The rings of Goodman, Fleetwood, Lee, and Wingfield are recorded as comparable examples.<sup>67</sup> A hand-written note that is located alongside these papers but dated to 25 July 1947 advises that the purchase has been completed.<sup>68</sup>

The autumn edition of Martin's Bank Magazine, issued to the bank's customers, includes a piece about the recent acquisition of the Tremayne ring.<sup>69</sup> The author begins to speculate on the reason for the existence of all the grasshopper rings. Since these rings all bear the Gresham crest on the reverse of their bezels, it has been widely accepted that they were gifted to these men by Gresham himself. The author puts forward the hypothesis that if the rings can all be dated to between 1569 and 1575, marking the granting of arms to the Goodman family and the death of Lee respectively, then they were probably given on the opening of the Royal Exchange in 1571.<sup>70</sup> The author considers that the rings were actually given by Gresham at a banquet that was held at his London home before the formal opening by the Queen. Since there is no record of who attended this feast, it is impossible to prove or disprove this theory based on this information alone.

An article written over two decades prior to the acquisition of the Tremayne ring offers a similar view but with some key differences.<sup>71</sup> Hemp dates the granting of arms to Goodman to 1573 and this is clearly significant for it not only narrows the production of the rings to between 1573 and 1575, but it also means that Goodman's ring could not have been a gift at the opening of the Royal Exchange. Hemp suggests that the Lee and Wingfield rings were given shortly after the opening, while the Goodman ring was produced after 1573. Diana Scarisbrick has provided a different rationale, suggesting that the rings were given by

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<sup>65</sup> "Signet Ring Offered to the Bank" in *Minutes of the London Board of Martin's Bank*, 18 June 1947, Barclays Group Archive, ref. 38/665, f.1.

<sup>66</sup> "Will of Edmund Tremayne of Collocombe, Devon", 3 December 1582, The National Archives, PROB 11/64, ff.350v-352r.

<sup>67</sup> *Minutes*, 18 June 1947, ref. 38/665, f.1.

<sup>68</sup> *Minutes of the London Board of Martin's Bank*, 25 July 1947, ref. 38/665, f.3.

<sup>69</sup> "A Gresham Relic", *Martin's Bank Magazine* (Autumn 1947), pp.28-29.

<sup>70</sup> "A Gresham Relic", p.28.

<sup>71</sup> Hemp, "The Goodman and Other Grasshopper Rings".

Gresham following his retirement from his post of Crown Agent in the Netherlands, in recognition of past services and assistance related to this role.<sup>72</sup>

Hemp was not aware of the Tremayne ring but information from the Martin's Bank Magazine and Scarisbrick's assumptions seem to indicate that much of the speculation over the reason for the existence of these rings has been based on the assumption that they were all produced around the same time for the same purpose. While it is true that Tremayne was Clerk of the Privy Council and as such would have communicated with Gresham, as an agent in Antwerp, Tremayne was not sworn into this role until May 1571.<sup>73</sup> He did not occupy this elevated status when Gresham held his dinner in January of that year and so there is little reason to suppose that he would have been invited. The publication of the Taylor ring throws up more information about these rings. This particular ring is dated 1575. The date is not a later addition, since the digits are painted in enamelling behind the setting. Further, the untraceable Woodhouse ring is dated to 1557.<sup>74</sup>

Given the wide variation in dates of these grasshopper rings, it is highly unlikely that they were given to mark the opening of the Royal Exchange. Variations in the design of the grasshoppers and the depiction of the arms also point to different craftsmen being commissioned to manufacture the rings at different times.



Figure 8.24: The Fleetwood ring: gold signet ring with an oval bezel set with rock crystal engraved with the arms of Fleetwood, beneath which the arms have been replicated in enamel. The reverse of the bezel is engraved with a once-enamelled grasshopper; England; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe AF.636.

<sup>72</sup> Diana Scarisbrick, "Sir Thomas Gresham and the Grasshopper Rings" in *Christie's Review of the Season 1978*, edited by John Herbert, (London: Studio Vista, 1978), 300-301, p.300.

<sup>73</sup> See the Institute of Historical Research online publication of 'Office-Holders: Clerks of the Privy Council 1540-1644', List of appointments, provisional list compiled by J C Sainty, April 2004 - <http://www.history.ac.uk/resources/office/privycounc>, accessed 11 July 2012.

<sup>74</sup> "Minutes of the Society of Antiquaries", Egerton MS 1041, f.274r, p.503.

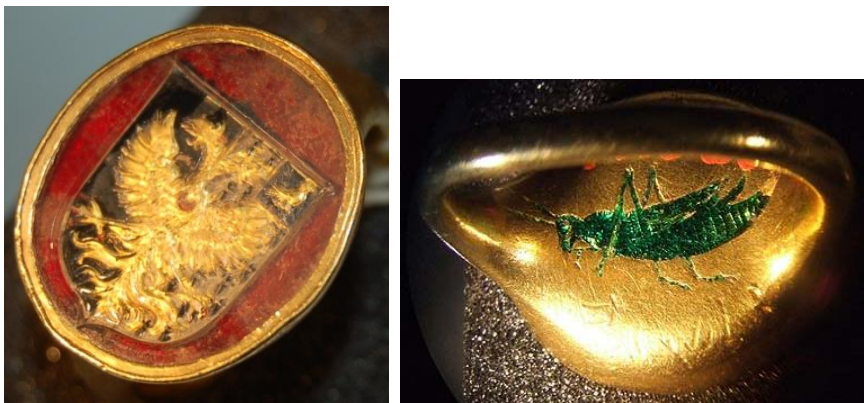


Figure 8.25: The Goodman ring: gold signet ring with an oval bezel set with rock crystal engraved with the arms of Goodman, with the arms painted in enamel underneath. To the reverse of the bezel is engraved a grasshopper enamelled green; England; 1573-1579. St Fagans: National History Museum 30.236.2.



Figure 8.26: The Lee ring: gold signet ring with an oval bezel set with chalcedony engraved with the arms of Lee. The reverse is engraved with a grasshopper, enamelled green; England; 1544-1575. Victoria and Albert Museum M.249-1928.



Figure 8.27: The Taylor ring: gold signet ring with an oval bezel engraved with the arms of Taylor, coloured behind with enamels and dated 1575. The reverse is engraved with a grasshopper that is enamelled green; England; 1575. Private collection.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Images taken from Scarisbrick, *Jewellery in Britain*, pl.VII.



Figure 8.28: The Tremayne ring: gold signet ring with oval bezel set with crystal engraved with the arms of Tremayne and bearing the initials 'ET' in reverse for Edmund Tremayne. The reverse is engraved with a grasshopper atop a mound with strong traces of green enamel; England; c.1570s. Barclays Group Archive (BGA) Ref. 9/4.

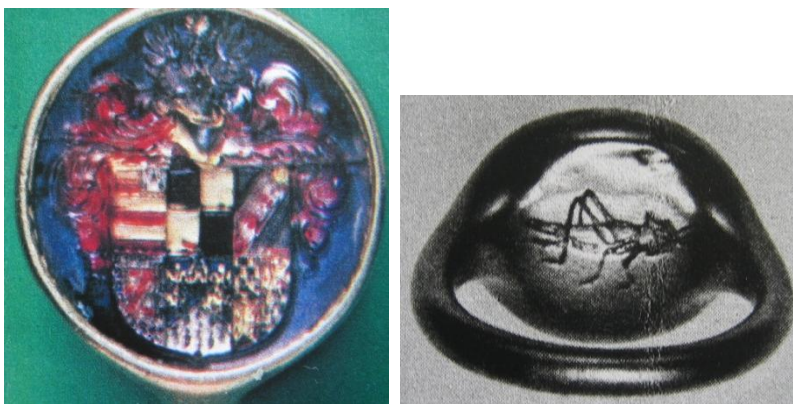


Figure 8.29: The Wingfield ring: gold signet ring with oval bezel set with crystal engraved with the arms and crest of Wingfield behind which the arms are replicated in coloured enamels. The reverse is engraved with a grasshopper and was probably originally enamelled; England; c.1570s. Private collection.<sup>76</sup>

The following table identifies the differences and similarities between the rings for which there is visual or material evidence.

<sup>76</sup> Images taken from "Fine Renaissance Bronzes and Works of Art", Christie's, 1977, colour frontispiece and plate 1.

Owner	Description of arms	Tinctures present (y/n)	Grasshopper enamelled (y/n)	Orientation of grasshopper	Other information	Location of ring	Date of ring
William Fleetwood	Red ground with shield (black and gold)	yes	n	Right	Crack to the crystal bezel	British Museum, since 1897	
Richard Lee	Shield, helm, mantling and crest	no	y	Right	Inscribed to the inside of hoop 'FLAME.ET.FAME'; granted arms in 1544	V&A, since 1928	1544-1575
Gabriel Goodman	Red ground with shield (black and gold)	yes	y	Left	Arms granted to brother in 1573	St Fagans, since 1930	1573-1579
Robert Taylor	Red ground with shield (with black and gold)	yes	y	Left	Dated on bezel, 1575	Private	1575
Edmund Tremayne	Shield, helm, mantling and crest	no	traces	Right	Grasshopper atop mound; initials 'ET' engraved to bezel; cracks to bezel; appointed in May 1571	Martin's Bank, from 1947; Barclays archive since 1990	
Jacques Wingfield	Blue ground with shield, mantling, helm and crest in varied colours	yes	n	Right		Private	

Table 8.1: Extant rings bearing the grasshopper crest of Sir Thomas Gresham.

The clear differences manifest in these six rings provide strong evidence that they were not commissioned together and were not made to commemorate an event such as the opening of the Royal Exchange or anything else. Instead, as the authors of the *Princely Magnificence* catalogue suggest, these rings were probably standard gifts from Gresham to those whom he owed some thanks or with whom he felt he shared a bond.<sup>77</sup> An earlier reference to the seventeenth-century play by Thomas Heywood, *If you Know me Not, You Know Nobody*,

<sup>77</sup> *Princely Magnificence*, no.30.

raised issues of authority and identity embodied within a signet ring. The influence of Gresham may have been such that a signet presented with the Gresham crest on the reverse may have provided evidence of the trustworthiness and creditworthiness of the individual. So, while these may have been gifts circulated to men within Gresham's network, they may have served a practical purpose too. Whether the true reason for the commissioning and giving of these rings to a number of high-profile Tudor men by Gresham may never be revealed, what is more significant perhaps is that their existence maps out physically Gresham's network.

Removing these grasshopper rings from the context of the Royal Exchange, it is highly probable that many more were initially made. More extant pieces may come to light, which may in turn allow for a fuller understanding of these gifts. For example, annotations to the British Museum's copy of the Hemp article include the following note:

Grasshopper ring with arms of Herbert (per pale, az. & gu, 3 lions ramp. in chief a mullet or) said to have been given to Charles Herbert Esq. father of Sir Edw. Herbert, Attorney General to Charles I, in possession of Mrs B C Canavan [...], see letter 28/4/1982.<sup>78</sup>

Unfortunately, this file is now missing from the archives in the British Museum and all that remains is a letter dated 3 July 1982 from Mrs Canavan thanking the curator for the information he provided on the Gresham grasshopper rings.<sup>79</sup> If Charles Herbert of Aston, Montgomeryshire was too a recipient of a grasshopper ring, there is no reason to suppose that more rings bearing the grasshopper crest on the reverse of their bezels should not come to light. The existence of more such rings would only serve to show to a greater extent the reach of Gresham's personal and business networks. While the true reason for the gift of these grasshopper rings may never be known, their very presence allows for a wider understanding of the extent of male sociability in the early modern period.

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<sup>78</sup> Annotations to Hemp, "The Goodman and Other Grasshopper Rings", p.408.

<sup>79</sup> "Letter from Mrs Canavan to Timothy Wilson", 3 July 1982, personal correspondence archive, department of Prehistory and Europe, British Museum.



## Rings and mourning: the making of memory through material culture

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The potency of an object to carry on the memory of an individual is found not just in literary sources but also in the testamentary instructions that are left by individuals upon their death. The wishes of Henry Grey (d.1614), sixth earl of Kent, were recorded in a sermon given at the time of his death and then published the following year. Whilst this publication provides some insight into how individuals chose to be remembered, with perhaps the most overt and lasting legacy being the mausoleum founded by Grey in 1605 ‘as an Emblem to *his posteritie*’, it is the gift he wished to leave to the relatively new servants within his household that is of interest for the purposes of this thesis.<sup>3</sup> These individuals ‘hee honoured either with a Ring of remembrance or comforted with halfe a yeeres wages for their present maintenance’.<sup>4</sup>

Internal evidence from early modern wills does not always provide answers for why some recipients were to be given sums of money while others received material objects, and it is often more confusing when the testator’s wishes are not entirely clear as to the exact nature of the bequest. So when the mercer John Leek of Boston laid out instructions in his will dated 19 August 1527 he concludes by providing for his executors George Garner and Thomas Gybson. However, both men were not to receive identical recompense: ‘ether off them geffying unto other off them xxvjs. viij*d*.; and to other off them a goblyt off sylver and a blake gown, the price off a yerde vs.’.<sup>5</sup> No further instructions are provided as to which of the two was to receive the money and who was in receipt of the silver goblet and black gown, which casts some doubt as to the personal value attached to these two material objects. Likewise, in the case of Grey there is no way of determining conclusively how many rings of remembrance were in fact given and to whom, and whether they had any real substantial value in creating a sense of remembrance of Henry Grey. It is likely that in instances such as this, the object bequeathed was sold in order to unlock its intrinsic monetary worth.

Instructions in early modern wills often also called for the selling of some objects of personal possession, including items of jewellery. The will of William Herbert (1506/7-

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<sup>2</sup> William Shakespeare, *All's Well That Ends Well*, Act V, Scene III, 108-12 and 118-20 in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. by The Shakespeare Head Press, Oxford, Edition (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 1999), p.782.

<sup>3</sup> John Bowle, *A Sermon Preached at Flitton in the Countie of Bedford at the Funerall of the Right Honourable Henrie Earle of Kent, the Sixteenth of March 1614* (London: Richard Woodroffe, 1615), F1v. The mausoleum still stands today in Flitton and is a Grade I listed building holding twenty-one monuments of the De Grey family.

<sup>4</sup> Bowle, *Sermon*, F1r.

<sup>5</sup> "The testament of John Leek of Boston (mercier), 19 August 1527" – Lincoln Court Consistory Wills, 1520-31 from 'Lincoln wills: 1527 (July-December)', *Lincoln Wills: volume 2: 1505-1530* (1918), pp. 35-58. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=53695>. Date accessed: 07 December 2009.



1570), first earl of Pembroke, is dated 23 December 1567. Within it he leaves ‘five hundredth partes in monnye and in Jewelles’ to his daughter Anne Talbot, with the remainder of his moveable goods (including jewels) being left to his heir Henry Herbert (b. in or after 1538; d.1601), second earl of Pembroke.<sup>6</sup> An addendum made the night before his death allowed for his wife to keep all of her jewels and also bequeaths ‘to the Quenes Majestie his best jewell which he named his greate ballace’.<sup>7</sup> In spite of these jewelled bequests, Pembroke also made it clear that same night ‘that the residewe of his Jewelles not bequeathed be solde by his sonne and heire Henrie lord Herberte of Cardif to be ymployed in such uses as his lordship ment if he had lyved’.<sup>8</sup> The selling of jewels in this way meant that they were reduced to their mere economic value. Pembroke realised that his jewelled possessions did also constitute a vast store of wealth that could provide charitable benefit.

The term ‘ring of remembrance’ as noted by Henry Grey seems to signify a particular object type, according to the historian and political writer James Howell (1594?-1666) in his multi-lingual dictionary *Lexicon Tetraglotton* (1660). Described in the English as simply ‘two or three interchain’d’ hoops, the Italian and French translations expand on this and suggest how such a ring was to be used, explaining how it was worn on the finger with one of the hoops being left to hang down as a reminder of something.<sup>9</sup> This entry appears under the section which refers to ‘Womens Apparel’ and is not referenced under the previous section that lists the clothing and jewels worn by men. The information given by the foreign language translations suggests that this type of ring was worn by a woman at a specific point in her life, possibly in mourning. It may be of the sort such as appears in a portrait by William Larkin (c.1580-1619) of a Jacobean woman, identified by the historian Roy Strong as Mary Radclyffe, wife of Sir John Stanhope of Elvaston (fig.9.1).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Charles R. Straton, ed., *Survey of the Lands of William First Earl of Pembroke. Transcribed from Vellum Rolls in the Possession of the Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery*, 2 vols. (Oxford: privately printed for the Roxburghe Club, 1909), vol.2, p.556.

<sup>7</sup> Straton, *Survey*, pp.557-58.

<sup>8</sup> Straton, *Survey*, p.558.

<sup>9</sup> ‘Ricordi, sono tre anelli l’uno con l’altro incatenati, i quali portandoli nel dito, uno d’essi si lascia pendolone, per ricordarsi di qualche cosa; Une souvenance, sont trois anneaux attachez l’un dans l’autre, lesquels portez au doigt, on en laisse pendiller un, pour se souvenir de quelque chose’ (Memories, they are three rings enchained with one another, which wearing them on the finger, one of them you leave hanging to remind yourself of something) – James Howell, *Lexicon Tetraglotton, an English-French-Italian-Spanish Dictionary: Whereunto Is Adjoined a Large Nomenclature of the Proper Terms (in All the Four) Belonging to Several Arts and Sciences, to Recreations, to Professions Both Liberal and Mechanik, &C. Divided into Fiftie Two Sections; with Another Volume of the Choicest Proverbs* (London: J.G. for Cornelius Bee, 1660), Section 34 ‘Womens Apparel’.

<sup>10</sup> Roy C. Strong, *The Tudor and Stuart Monarchy. Pageantry, Painting, Iconography. III. Jacobean and Caroline* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 1998), p.2.



Figure 9.1: William Larkin; portrait of Mary Radclyffe; 1610-1613; oil on panel. The Berger Collection.

However, an entry in the 1611 French-English dictionary by the English lexicographer Randle Cotgrave (fl.1587-1630?) suggests that a ring of remembrance was worn also by men. He refers to it as ‘a Ring with many hoopes, whereof a man lets one hang downe when he would be put in mind of a thing’.<sup>11</sup> The type of ring in question is today commonly called a puzzle ring, possibly in reference to the way the wearer would need to figure out the arrangement of all the hoops before placing it on his/her finger.

The British Museum has identified forty-seven puzzle rings within its collection, though five of these are of Chinese origin. Of the forty-two European puzzle rings only one has been determined a Roman artefact, while the remainder have either no definite date of production or are broadly defined as being of seventeenth to nineteenth century manufacture.<sup>12</sup> The difficulty in the dating of such rings was expressed by the authors of *The Ring: from Antiquity to the Twentieth Century* (1981) being as a result the popularity of this

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<sup>11</sup> Randle Cotgrave, *A Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues* (London: printed by Adam Islip, 1611), ‘souvenance’.

<sup>12</sup> Of the puzzle rings that have a production date of seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, three have been dated to the seventeenth century, two to the eighteenth century, and one to the nineteenth century.

object type, which still prevails in modern times.<sup>13</sup> The number of hoops that form each ring varies from two (strictly speaking this would be called a gimmel ring) to as many as a dozen.<sup>14</sup> Ornament to these rings includes the use of precious and semi-precious gemstones, engraved decoration, and symbolic representations (figs.9.2-9.3).



Figure 9.2: Gold puzzle fede-ring of five interlaced hoops; eighteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe AF.1155.



Figure 9.3: Gold puzzle fede-ring of seven interlaced hoops; no date. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe AF.1158.

Thus whilst a ring of remembrance was an object type that served a mnemonic function resulting from the mode of its use, it remained clearly distinctive from the rings that were given *in* remembrance which played a mnemonic role through their representation alone and not through any physical properties. A ring given in remembrance is often referred to today as a mourning ring. There does not appear to be any indication that such terminology

<sup>13</sup> Anne Ward, John Cherry, Charlotte Gere, and Barbara Cartlidge, *The Ring: From Antiquity to the Twentieth Century* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1981), pl.227. The authors state that in Edmund Waterton, *Dactylitheca Watertoniana: a descriptive catalogue of the finger-rings in the collection of Mrs Waterton* [manuscript] (1866) [National Art Library (Great Britain), Manuscript MSL/1879/1275] Waterton gives as the purpose of puzzle rings the explanation offered by Fortunio Liceti of Genoa in *De annulis antiquis liber singularis* (Udine, 1645) as mnemonic or memory rings.

<sup>14</sup> For more information on the gimmel ring, see Chapter 6 above.

was adopted by sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century men and women, and in fact the earliest recorded usage of the term by the Oxford English Dictionary is in 1653.<sup>15</sup> Despite the slight anachronism, for clarity within this thesis rings that were used in remembrance during the period under consideration (1509-1625) will be referred to as mourning rings.

Common practice in the sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries seems to have been the provision of money in wills for the creation of mourning rings, rather than bequests of actual rings. The playwright William Shakespeare (1564-1616) followed this tradition in his will dated 25 March 1616 by providing the sum of 26s. 8d. to seven individuals for the purchase of rings.<sup>16</sup> Whilst the will does not define these rings as mourning rings, it remained clear that the purpose of the ring was to act as a remembrance of Shakespeare. Alternatively, the executors of a will might have been instructed to spend a determined sum of money on the purchase or commissioning of rings, which would then be circulated to others in remembrance. This course of action was decided upon by Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester (d.1555) and he left forty pounds for this purpose: 'Item, I will to be bestowed uppon ringes to geve to my especiall good lordes and freendes to remembre me withall, at the discrecion of myn executours, xl li.'.<sup>17</sup>

In most instances relating to the bequests of mourning rings, there is only generic mention of rings. The will of Lady Anne Newdigate (1574-1618) however is unique for the detail it provides. For in her provision for the making of rings 'of ten or twelve shillings price', Lady Newdigate also stipulated the precise nature of their form. The rings were to have 'a pansy being my father's Crest, engraven on the outside and two letters for my name enamelled with black on either side the pansy and an inscription within to be in latin, these words following: Death is the beginning of life'.<sup>18</sup> In his will dated 27 November 1538,

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<sup>15</sup> Nicholas Hookes, *Amanda, a sacrifice to an unknown goddesse, or, A free-will offering of a loving heart to a sweet-heart* (London: Printed by T.R. and E.M. for Humphrey Tuckey, 1653) cited in "mourning, n.1". *OED Online* (Oxford University Press) 22 December 2011, <<http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/122947?redirectedFrom=mourning%20ring>>.

<sup>16</sup> Shakespeare gave this sum of money to four of his Stratford-upon-Avon friends: Hamlet Sadler (d.1624), William Reynolds (1575-1633), Anthony Nash (d.1622), and Thomas Nash (1593-1647). His London colleagues John Heminges (d.1630), Richard Burbage (1568-1619), and Henry Condell (1576-1627) each received the same sum of money for the same purpose. "The will of William Shakespeare", The National Archives, PROB 1/4 discussed in Tarnya Cooper, *Searching for Shakespeare*, (London: National Portrait Gallery, 2006), cat. nos. 92a-c.

<sup>17</sup> John Gough Nichols and John Bruce, eds., *Wills from Doctor's Commons. A Selection from the Wills of Eminent Persons Proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 1495-1695*, vol. 83 (London: The Camden Society, 1863), pp.43-44.

<sup>18</sup> Lady Anne Emily Newdigate-Newdegate, *Gossip from a Muniment Room: Being Passages in the Lives of Anne and Mary Fytton, 1574 to 1618. Transcribed and Edited by Lady Newdigate-Newdegate*, 2nd ed., (London: D. Nutt, 1898), p.157 cited in Diana Scarisbrick, *Jewellery in Britain 1066-1837: A Documentary, Social, Literary and Artistic Survey* (Norwich: Michael Russell, 1994), pp.105-06.

Roger Corbett (d.1538/1539) provides for the making of thirty gold rings to the value of five shillings each ‘which Rynges shalbe marked w[i]th a R and a C’. These were to be given ‘to seuerall and trusty frends for a remembraunce’.<sup>19</sup>

Such specificity concerning mourning rings was uncommon and in fact there was no real prescription that determined their form. Similar ideas have been discussed in an earlier chapter with regards to those rings used in the marriage ceremony. It was made clear how it was not the form of the ring that defined it as a marriage ring; rather it was the context of its exchange. Similarly then, mourning rings were those rings that were created in memory of the deceased. Later in the seventeenth century mourning rings do begin to establish convention of form. To the inner surface of the hoop there is often an inscription that provides information about the deceased: their initials, date of birth, and sometimes age. Emblems typically used on *memento mori* devices populate the outer face of the hoop and are enamelled (figs.9.4-9.5).



Figure 9.4: Once enamelled gold mourning ring with skull, cross-bones and foliate decoration. Inscribed in italics ‘In mem: S: P: obt 4 Nov 85 aetat 21’; made by goldsmith IC; England; 1685. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe AF.1601.



Figure 9.5: Detail of inscription on British Museum, Prehistory and Europe AF.1601.

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<sup>19</sup> "Will of Roger Corbett", 1 February 1539, The National Archives, PROB 11/27/408, f.194v.



Much plainer examples of this sort do prevail and a ring dated to 1723 demonstrates this low-key form of remembrance, for it is a plain gold hoop of d-shape cross-section inscribed only with the initials ‘AS’ and the date.<sup>20</sup> A late sixteenth-century example within the British Museum’s collection takes on this same form and contains the inscription ‘W.I.L. 1592’.<sup>21</sup> A mourning ring that can be dated to 1690 as a result of its inscription was discovered by a member of the public using a metal detector in 2008 and is typical of many late seventeenth-century survivals. The find was reported through the Treasure Act (1996) and the ring was subsequently acquired by Elmbridge Museum in Surrey. It comprises a flat gold band with a skull engraved to the exterior face, and inside it contains the inscription ‘prepare to follow FV. Ob; 16 May 70’ in addition to a maker’s mark (fig.9.6).<sup>22</sup>



Figure 9.6: Gold mourning ring, found in Chobham, Surrey; England; dated 1670. Treasure ID: 2008 T493; PAS number SUR-676831. Elmbridge Museum, Surrey.

<sup>20</sup> British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1961,12-2.4.

<sup>21</sup> British Museum, Prehistory and Europe AF.1525.

<sup>22</sup> Michael Lewis, ed., *Portable Antiquities and Treasure Annual Report 2008* (London: Department of Portable Antiquities and Treasure, British Museum, 2010), no.443.

Whilst this ring is not unusual in that it is characteristic of other contemporary mourning rings, documentary evidence exists that indicates strongly the identity of the individual referred to by the initials FV. The parish registers for Stoke d'Abernon record the death of Sir Francis Vincent, Baronet on 16 May 1670, with his burial taking place four days later.<sup>23</sup> Sir Francis' will was drawn up in the year preceding his death and he discusses certain bequests of mourning rings.

Item I give and bequeath vnto my Loving Sister Mrs Katherine Vane the Sume of Tenn pounds to buy her a Ring Item I give and bequeath vnto my said cousin Matthew Carleton thre pounds and to his wife Forty shillings to buy them Rings if they shalbe alieue at the tyme of my Decease [...] Item I give and bequeath unto my said Louing Brother and Friends S[i]r Walter Uane S[i]r William Howard and Arthur Onslowe the Sum[m]e of Tenn pounds a peece to buy them Rings.<sup>24</sup>

While it is impossible to say with certainty that the ring discovered in 2008 is one of the rings discussed in the will of Sir Francis, there is no reason why it could not be. Though based on the weight, size, form, and simplicity of the ring it is unlikely that it came to the value of £10 and so is most probably that of Matthew Carleton or his wife.<sup>25</sup>

Significantly, mourning rings had never been the property of the testator. The nature of the bequest was therefore not to provide an individual with an item that once had some personal attachment to the deceased. Instead, a mourning ring marked out the relationships that a man within the early modern period had forged. Whilst not only indicative of his closest and strongest bonds, the patterns of movement created in the circulation of these rings from a central locus (the deceased) reflected and acknowledged the patterns of movement that a man had made during his lifetime.

With life expectancy being relatively low during the sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries, it is not altogether wrong to suppose that an individual (particularly one of fairly

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<sup>23</sup> William Bruce Bannerman, ed., *The Parish Registers of Stoke D'abernon, Co. Surrey* (London: privately printed by The Parish Register Society, 1917), p.35. I am grateful to David Taylor for alerting me to this reference.

<sup>24</sup> "Will of Sir Francis Vincent of Stoke D'abernon, Surrey", 29 June 1670, The National Archives, PROB 11/333/19, ff.67r-69r, f.68v. I am grateful to David Taylor for alerting me to this reference. See also report on Sir Francis Vincent by David Taylor, local historian of Cobham, dated 10 September 2008 to be found on the Portable Antiquities Scheme website for object record SUR-676831 A POST MEDIEVAL RING. Webpage available at: <http://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/231085> [Accessed: 29 Dec 2011], though Taylor's transcription for this document is not entirely accurate.

<sup>25</sup> Email correspondence with Sue Webber, Collections Officer, Elmbridge Museum on 10 January 2012 confirms the weight of the ring as 3.4 grams and that a local jeweller believes it to be made of 24 carats.

high social standing) may have amassed a number of mourning rings over a lifetime.<sup>26</sup> The survival of a pair of gold chocolate cups certainly supports this theory and also provides an interesting and novel approach to disposal (fig.9.7).



Figure 9.7: The Palmerston Gold Chocolate Cups; John Chartier; London; c.1700. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 2005,6-4.1&2.

These two gold chocolate cups are known as the Palmerston Gold Chocolate Cups, since they were made for and later bequeathed by Anne Houblon, Viscountess Palmerston (d.1735).<sup>27</sup> In her will dated 4 September 1726, Lady Palmerston leaves these two items to her husband Henry Temple (c.1673-1757), first Viscount Palmerston, describing them as ‘the 2 lesser Chocolate Cups you would sometimes look on as a Remembrance of Death, and also of the fondest and Faithfullest Friend you ever had’. It has been generally accepted that these cups were made by melting down gold mourning rings that had been left either to Lady Palmerston’s father, Abraham Houblon, governor of the Bank of England from 1703 until 1705, or her brother Sir Richard. It is not surprising that Lady Palmerston would have chosen to recycle the gold content of a group of mourning rings to which she had no emotional attachment. However, she retained the memorial nature of the original objects through the inscriptions on the underside of the base and the inside of the handle of each cup (fig.9.8).

<sup>26</sup> The average life expectancy in London was between 30 and 40 years – Hazel Forsyth and Alan Bryson, "Gamaliell Pye, Citizen of London. A Newly Discovered 16th-Century City Portrait", *The British Art Journal* VI, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2005): 62-70, p.62. See also Steve Rappaport, *Worlds within Worlds: Structures of Life in Sixteenth-Century London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp.69-71 particularly p.69 where he cites data from R. Finlay, *Population and the Metropolis. The Demography of London 1580-1650* (Cambridge, 1981), pp.100, 108, table 5.16 (four London parishes), and 92, table 5.5 (elsewhere in England) to show that in poorer London parishes life expectancy was 20-25 years, half that of the rest of England, while in richer parishes life expectancy was about 30-35 years.

<sup>27</sup> Information taken from the catalogue record for British Museum Prehistory and Europe 2005,6-4.1&2.





Figure 9.8 Detail of inscriptions on the Palmerston Gold Chocolate Cups. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 2005,6-4.1&2.

The delicate nature of the cups indicates that there was a limited amount of gold available and to perhaps facilitate their manufacture they have been hammered, rather than cast, which allowed the goldsmith greater control in his craft. The weight of the cups would suggest that about twenty mourning rings were melted down in order to create them. These cups offer a unique example of how jewellery could be recycled and no other recorded example exists of mourning rings being melted down for use in this way. However, the very nature of their creation does suggest that as generational distance increased, personal attachment decreased and jewels of any nature were likely to face the melting pot in order to unlock their basic material worth.

Mourning rings are not to be confused with *memento mori* rings. The term translates to ‘remember you must die’ and so these rings were worn by the living as a constant visual reminder of the transient quality of life. Such rings are distinguishable by the decorative elements that appear to the outer face of the hoop: cross-bones, skeletons, death’s heads, and hourglasses. They also usually contain inscriptions to the interior surface in English or Latin that have some resonance to the inevitability of death. Such emblems were not only restricted to rings and there are a number of recorded examples of items that functioned as a *memento*

*mori*. A coffin-shaped gold and enamelled pendant, complete with a rock-crystal hinged cover, conceals a skeleton in high-relief (fig.9.9).



Figure 9.9: Gold and enamelled pendant; possibly France; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1978, 10-2.117.

This is not an isolated example of such a jewel: the British Museum has a similar piece in enamelled gold and although the coffin remains empty, there is an inscription engraved on its sides.<sup>28</sup> Miniature coffins in carved boxwood and in silver demonstrate that this was a popular object type.<sup>29</sup> Another gold and enamelled coffin, dated to the mid-sixteenth century, still containing its skeleton and with the inscription ‘THROUGH THE RESVRRECTION OF CHRISTE WE BE ALL SANCTIFIED’ was discovered in the ruins of Torre Abbey in Devon and is now within the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum.<sup>30</sup> The overt symbolism of the coffin in all these jewels, which mirrored the form of contemporary coffins, ensured that the message of the certainty of death was clearly understood.

That items containing *memento mori* devices were used during an individual’s lifetime is attested to by references such as that which appears in the 1618 will of John Davies – ‘Item, I give and bequeathe unto my beloved freinde, ---- Coxe, draper, my rynge of goulde with a deathes heade in yt’.<sup>31</sup> The use of the possessive pronoun ‘my’ within this

<sup>28</sup> British Museum Prehistory and Europe AF.2971 - the inscription reads ‘COGITA. MORI VT VITAS\*’ (Think on death so that you may live).

<sup>29</sup> British Museum, Prehistory and Europe WB.240 and AF.2970.

<sup>30</sup> Victoria and Albert Museum 3581-1856.

<sup>31</sup> Nichols and Bruce, eds., *Wills from Doctor's Common.*, p.88. According to the editors, the author of the will is possibly the poet and writer, John Davies of Hereford.

rhetoric suggests strongly that this ring was used by Davies throughout his life. Jewels such as these were adopted to demonstrate the fragility of life and the futility of worldly goods.

A poignant reminder of this is found in the final words and actions of Lady Katherine Grey (1540?-1568), recorded for posterity as she lay prisoner in the Tower of London.<sup>32</sup> She instructs her guardian Owen Hopton, who became lieutenant of the Tower in 1570, to pass her a box of rings.<sup>33</sup> The final ring she takes from the box bears the image of a death's head and this she also wished to be delivered to her husband Edward Seymour (1539?-1621), earl of Hertford, along with several other rings.

This shalle the Laste tokene vnto my Lorde that euer I shall send him, it is the picture of my selfe the wordes about the deathes heade weare these, (whill I lyue yores).<sup>34</sup>

The use of *memento mori* devices on merchant signet rings is highly significant, for they would serve as a stark reminder whilst conducting business that true rewards were not to be found in monetary affairs. One such ring incorporates a death's head and merchant's mark by the insertion of a swivelling oval plate within the hexagonal-shaped bezel (fig.9.10).<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> "A Breefe Discourse of the Speeche & Manner of [Th]E Departing out of This Life of the Lady Katherine", 27 January 1567, British Library, Harley MS 39, ff. 373r-374v. This narrative can also be found in British Library, Cotton Titus MS 107. This text seems to have provided the basis for a poem written by the author Thomas Churchyard entitled "A dollfull discourse of a Lady and Knight" (1572): William M. Schutte, "Thomas Churchyard's 'Dollfull Discourse' and the Death of Lady Katherine Grey", *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 15, no. 4 (Winter 1984): 471-87. For more information regarding the circumstances of Katherine Grey's imprisonment, see Chapter 6 above.

<sup>33</sup> Information on Owen Hopton of Cockfield Hall, Yoxford in Suffolk taken from Susan Doran, "Seymour [Grey], Katherine, Countess of Hertford (1540?-1568)" in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), online ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25157> (accessed January 5, 2012)].

<sup>34</sup> "A Breefe Discourse", Harley MS 39, f.373r. The section discussing the rings can also be found in Churchyard's narrative poem. See Thomas Churchyard, "A Dollfull Discourse of a Lady and a Knight" in *The Firste Parte of Churchyardes Chippes Contayning Twelue Seruerall Labours* (London: printed by Thomas Marshe, 1575), ff.27r-38r.

<sup>35</sup> The Victoria and Albert Museum also has a ring of this type, combining the practical function of a merchant's signet with the more spiritual aspect of a *memento mori* jewel – VAM M.18-1929.



Figure 9.10: Gold and enamelled ring with merchant's mark and *memento mori* device, inscribed '+ MORS BONIS \* GRATA' ('Death is pleasing to the good'); England; sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1871,3-2.5.

The sentiments conveyed by *memento mori* jewels are echoed in other contemporary media, including paintings, such as in the accumulation of *vanitas* in *The Knight's Dream* by Antonio de Pereda (c.1611-1678) or in the presence of the anamorphic skull in Hans Holbein the Younger's (1497/8-1543) *The Ambassadors* (figs.9.11-9.12).<sup>36</sup>



Figure 9.11: Antonio de Pereda; *The Knight's Dream* (1655); oil on canvas. Real Accademia de Bellas Artes, Madrid.

<sup>36</sup> For more information on the Holbein painting see Susan Foister, Roy Ashok, and Martin Wyld, *Making and Meaning: Holbein's Ambassadors* (London: National Gallery Publications, 1997); John North, *The Ambassadors' Secret: Holbein and the World of the Renaissance* (London: Phoenix, 2004); and John Rowlands, *Holbein: The Paintings of Hans Holbein the Younger* (Boston: David R. Godine, 1985).





Figure 9.12: Hans Holbein the Younger; *Jean de Dinteville and Georges de Selve (The Ambassadors)*; 1533; oil on oak. National Gallery 1314.

The popularity of *memento mori* jewels within the sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries signalled a deep appreciation for the passing of time and the fleeting nature of life. Keith Thomas addresses the concerns of early modern citizens with the afterlife in the final section of his recent publication *The Ends of Life* (2009).<sup>37</sup> Since the memory of a person could endure far beyond their brief human existence, according to Thomas, thoughts turned to ways of ensuring posthumous fame to avoid anonymity and obscurity. This parallels contemporary thought, for as the poet John Weever (1575/6-1632) writes in his narrative poem, *The Mirror of Martyrs* (1601), on the proto-protestant martyr Sir John Oldcastle 'For naught but fame man after death inherits'.<sup>38</sup>

Contemporary wills serve to highlight particular measures that were taken by citizens in the early modern period to preserve an individual's memory. Propriety demanded that a certain level of convention was adhered to within these wills and the preambles are fairly formulaic: the wish for the soul to be bequeathed to God; and the provision of money to pay towards regular prayers and intercessions, which not only aimed to aid the soul of the departed to enter heaven but also provided for continued remembrance. According to the

<sup>37</sup> Keith Thomas, *The Ends of Life: Roads to Fulfilment in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), Chapter 7 'Fame and the Afterlife', pp.226-67.

<sup>38</sup> John Weever, *The Mirror of Martyrs, or the Life and Death of That Thrice Valiant Capitaine, and Most Godly Martyre Sir Iohn Old-Castle Knight Lord Cobham* (William Wood, 1601), F2.

sources that Thomas cites, these acts of remembrance were important.<sup>39</sup> Yet there were other steps that could be taken, which preserved one's memory through more tangible means.

As Thomas rightly points out 'Many of the central social practices of the early modern period, from publishing books to commissioning portraits, become more intelligible when they are seen as the product of this concern with posthumous reputation'.<sup>40</sup> Within a religious environment, the commissioning of monuments or statues served as a constant reminder of the departed. However imposing such objects proved to be, large-scale gestures of the sort were not accessible to all.

Perhaps providing an even more potent and tangible reminder of the deceased were those bequests that constituted items of personal possession. For the act of passing on personal property to family and friends signalled and reinforced the bonds of kinship that were forged over a lifetime. In examining early modern wills, it is possible to appreciate the value of both the recipient and the bequeathed article. When the Lincolnshire mercer John Leek left a number of items, including his late wife's wedding ring, to Alice Arley in 1527, he left also a tangible reminder of his wife, himself, and their union. Being in receipt of such a symbolically-charged bequest, it is not improbable to suppose that Alice Arley was a valued kinswoman.<sup>41</sup>

The evidence that can be gleaned from wills with regards to jewellery reveals two key concerns for men related to death in the early modern period: lineage and remembrance. In bequests for mourning rings there is a clear emphasis on remembrance. How objects such as these and other jewels were able to carry on the memory of an individual has been discussed above; what follows is how they operated within the sphere of creating lineage and what this meant to a man in the early modern period.

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<sup>39</sup> Thomas, *Ends of Life*, pp.235-37, 242-43.

<sup>40</sup> Thomas, *Ends of Life*, p.240.

<sup>41</sup> 'To Alys Arley my wyffys weddyng ryng, and a ambre that standyth in the smalle ale buttre, and all the ix shelffes that be there, and a long table and the trestyls that is in the halle, and a carpyt cloth, a chare in the haule, a blak chyst carvyd in the chamber, ij formys, ij bed stedes and all the payntyd clothys in the chamber, and a pendent and a bokyll off sylver for a gyrdyll' – "The testament of John Leek of Boston, mercer" dated 19 August 1527. Lincoln Consistory Court, 1520-31, f.108v taken from 'Lincoln wills: 1527 (July-December)', Lincoln Wills: volume 2: 1505-1530 (1918), pp. 35-58. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=53695>. Date accessed: 07 December 2009.

## Chapter 10

### Conclusion: male memory and family heritage

Perhaps more than any other type of material culture, jewels were suited to being passed down a family line to create a sense of heritage. Despite this, the survival of Renaissance and early modern jewellery, intact and unchanged from its original design, is extremely rare. Unsurprisingly, the high intrinsic value associated with the precious materials often used in their production meant that such objects were melted down and recycled, both in times of economic need and when fashions became outdated. A new aesthetic in the seventeenth century favoured an abundance of gemstones, with the gold merely used as a setting. The Arnold Lulls *Book of Jewels* serves as an excellent visual repository of this new fashion (fig.10.1).<sup>1</sup> The work of the enameller and goldsmith so popular in the preceding century ceased to be fashionable and so jewels were altered, often beyond recognition. This was certainly not a new practice. In Chapter 2 it has already been explained how, prior to the discovery of the New World mines, raw materials were often obtained from existing objects.

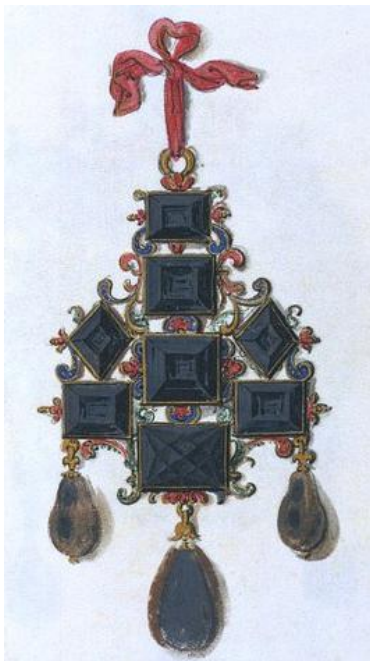


Figure 10.1: Design for a pendant; Arnold Lulls; England; c.1590; pencil, pen and ink, wash, body-colour and gold. Victoria and Albert Museum, D.6:3-1896.

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<sup>1</sup> John Hayward, "The Arnold Lulls Book of Jewels and the Court Jewellers of Queen Anne of Denmark", *Archaeologica* 108, (1986): 227-37 and plates LXXXII-LXXXVIII.

Mindful of the proclivity by future generations to break up a jewelled object (favouring fashion over heritage), the French king Francis I (1494-1547) selected eight jewelled objects and gave them the status of 'Jewels of the Crown'.<sup>2</sup> Such a ruling made these French Crown Jewels inalienable. This may have also in part had to do with an attempt by Mary Tudor (1496-1533) to claw back those jewels given to her during her brief marriage to the French king Louis XII (1462-1515). In a despatch dated 2 January 1516 the Venetian ambassador to England, Sebastian Giustinian, wrote of three complaints that Henry VIII (r.1509-1547) had had regarding the treatment of his sister Mary Tudor following the death of Louis XII in 1515. He wrote that the final complaint was for her to 'receive back the jewels which King Louis gave her as personal ornaments'.<sup>3</sup>

With this new ruling, a foreign consort such as Francis I's second wife Eleanor of Austria (1498-1558) or Mary Queen of Scots (1542-1587), the wife of Francis II of France (1544-1560), was permitted use of these items only during her marriage. Following the death of both kings in 1547 and 1560, respectively, neither Eleanor nor Mary could lay claim to these jewels nor remove them from France. It is certainly not coincidental that Francis I established the Royal Jewels only weeks before his marriage to Eleanor of Austria in July 1530.

This act by Francis I seemed to be prompted more by the fear of losing precious stones to a foreign bride, than an attempt to preserve his jewels intact. His ruling allowed for the items of jewellery to be altered, providing only that the number and weight of the gemstones remained the same.<sup>4</sup> In doing so, the integrity of the original royal jewels was not preserved but nonetheless there was an attempt to ensure that these objects were not re-used in the production of plate or other items. Francis I did not set out stricter guidelines governing the fate of the French Crown Jewels but the motivation for his ruling seemed to be one of conferring status on a group of objects, rather than the preservation of heirlooms. Perhaps this was because these jewels were effectively state-owned, rather than personal items.

There are examples of elite Englishmen who had concerns to preserve their own heritage through their jewels and a small number of these survive today, thanks to their

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<sup>2</sup> Anna Somers Cocks, "The Status and Making of Jewellery, 1500-1630" in *Princely Magnificence: Court Jewels of the Renaissance, 1500-1630*, 3-7 (London: Debrett's Peerage Ltd, 1980), p.3.

<sup>3</sup> Sebastian Giustinian, *Four Years at the Court of Henry VIII. Selection of Despatches Written by the Venetian Ambassador, Sebastian Giustinian, and Addressed to the Signory of Venice, January 12th 1515, to July 26th 1519*, translated by Rawdon Brown, 2 vols. (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1854), vol.1, p.160.

<sup>4</sup> See Constant German Bapst, *Histoire des bijoux de la couronne de France d'après des documents inédits...Ouvrage orné de cinquante gravures* (Paris, 1889), p.3 cited in Somers Cocks, "The Status and Making of Jewellery", p.3.



efforts. This final concluding chapter uses two examples of men who tried to attach concepts of personal achievement and patrilineage to the jewels they left as part of their inheritance: Thomas Lyte and Sir Thomas Sackville.

Within an earlier section of this thesis it was stressed the importance of marriage for a masculine identity. Marriage allowed for the formation of one's own household within a community which in itself was an overt statement of independence. Marriage also indicated sexual maturity and, in the eyes of God and the law, it enabled the creation of legitimate heirs. A male heir was essential to ensure a family's survival. Posthumous fame could be secured by literary and physical monuments, but nothing would secure heritage more than a son. As Sir William Monson explained to his son in 1625 'the great-grandfather of your grandfather was a knight by title and John by name: which name we desire to give to our eldest sons [...] because man cannot himself live for ever, he desires to live in his posterity; and if I had a hundred sons, my greatest hope must depend on you, as you are my eldest'.<sup>5</sup>

A man's posterity embodied in his male descendents could also be manifested through the physicality of material objects that were deliberately designated as pieces which should be passed from generation to generation. This concept is evident in the reply that Bertram offers to Diana after she requests his ancestral ring as a token of his affection in Shakespeare's play *All's Well That Ends Well*.

I'll lend it thee, my dear; but have no power  
To give it from me.  
[...]  
It is an honour 'longing to our house,  
Bequeathed down from many ancestors  
Which were the greatest obloquy i'the world  
In me to lose.<sup>6</sup>

The significance of the ring in this context is discussed in some depth by Garrett A. Sullivan Jr. in his essay "'Be This Sweet Helen's Knell, and Now Forget Her': Forgetting and Desire in

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<sup>5</sup> *The Naval Tracts of Sir William Monson*, edited by M. Oppenheim (Navy Recs Society, 1902-14), vol.1, pp.102, 111 cited in Keith Thomas, *The Ends of Life: Roads to Fulfilment in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p.257.

<sup>6</sup> Shakespeare, *All's Well That Ends Well* cited in William Shakespeare, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, The Shakespeare Head Press, Oxford ed. (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 1999), Act IV, Scene II, lines 40-41, 42-45. Subsequent references within the text relate to this edition. Lineation is indicated by square brackets within the main body of text.

*All's Well That Ends Well*".<sup>7</sup> He asserts that the emphasis on it having been 'Bequeathed down from many ancestors' [4.2.43] is representative of 'an aristocratic, masculinist identity' to which the character Bertram appeals when pushed by the King towards marrying Helena, who is of lesser birth. There is the suggestion by David Berkeley and Donald Keesee that should a union such as this proceed, her lower social status would taint the blood of Bertram's descendents.<sup>8</sup> They cite the contemporary author Andrew Boorde (c.1490-1549) with his claims of 'good blode, in the which consysteth the lyfe of man'.<sup>9</sup> Thus this 'coerced contamination' threatens 'Bertram's masculinist identity'.<sup>10</sup>

For Bertram the ring symbolises simultaneously patrilineage, family memory, and his individual identity. In constructing this dialogue Shakespeare drew on contemporary practice which used testamentary requests designed to prevent the alienation of precious pieces even when heirs found themselves in financial difficulties. To prevent a less caring or more desperate generation from betraying family memory, a sale (or indeed any other form of alienation) has to be seen as a betrayal of one's ancestors.<sup>11</sup> This explains why Bertram describes such an act as 'the greatest obloquy i'the world' [4.2.43].

For the scholar Michael Friedman a piece like this not only created links to the past for an individual and reminded him of his lineage, but it also extended forwards to future generations:

Bertram's ring represents not only his duty to emulate his honorable forbears, but also his link in a chain of inheritance that has endured for several generations. In order to avoid "the greatest obloquy i' th' world," Bertram must both keep the ring (the honor of his house handed down to him intact by his father) and eventually produce a "sequent issue" (5.3.196) to whom he may bequeath it. Thus, Bertram's responsibility extends to future generations as well as to the past; he owes it to his father *and* his son to serve as the intermediary between them.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Garrett A. Sullivan Jr., "'Be This Sweet Helen's Knell, and Now Forget Her': Forgetting and Desire in *All's Well That Ends Well*" in *Memory and Forgetting in English Renaissance Drama: Shakespeare, Marlowe, Webster* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp.44-64.

<sup>8</sup> David S. Berkeley and Donald Keesee, "Bertram's Blood-Consciousness in *All's Well That Ends Well*", *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 31, no. 2, Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama (Spring, 1991): 247-58, p.248.

<sup>9</sup> Andrew Boorde, *A Compendyous Regyment or a dyetary of Helth* (1542), EETS, Extra Series 10, chap. 3, p.235 cited in Berkeley and Keesee, "Bertram's Blood-Consciousness", p.248. See also Andrew Boorde, *A compendyous regyment or a dyetary of healthe made in Mountpyllyer, by Andrewe Boorde of physycke doctour, newly corrected and imprinted with dyuers addycyons dedycated to the armypotent Prynce and valyent Lorde Thomas Duke of Northfolke* (London: Wyllyam Powell, 1547), Aiiiv.

<sup>10</sup> Sullivan Jr., "Forgetting and Desire", p.56.

<sup>11</sup> Sullivan Jr., "Forgetting and Desire", p.57.

<sup>12</sup> Michael D. Friedman, "'Service Is No Heritage': Bertram and the Ideology of Procreation", *Studies in Philology*, 92, no. 1 (Winter, 1995): 80-101, p.85.

In acknowledgment of the significant meaning to one's past, present, and future that is embodied in this single object, Bertram utters the following words as he gives away his ring to Diana: 'My house, mine honour, yea, my life, be thine' [4.2.52].

These exchanges within *All's Well That Ends Well* and the significance that the ring continues to play within the narrative parallel contemporary concerns with lineage. One early modern will reflects these same ideas: the will of Sir Thomas Sackville, which along with the Lyte Jewel, provides a fitting conclusion to this dissertation. Not only does this will provide ample evidence for the creation of heirloom jewels, it is altogether more remarkable for the details given of these and other bequeathed items of jewellery.

### 10.1 The will of Sir Thomas Sackville

Thomas Sackville (c.1536-1608), Baron Buckhurst and from 13 May 1604 the first earl of Dorset, cuts an austere figure in the portrait of him by the artist John de Critz the elder (c.1552-1642) in his later years (fig.10.2).



Figure 10.2: Thomas Sackville, first earl of Dorset; attributed to John De Critz the elder; 1601; oil on panel. National Portrait Gallery, NPG 4024.

Sackville held the position of Lord Treasurer from 1599 and in 1601 he became Lord High Steward. So noted was his work as an administrator and statesman that he appears in a

prominent position in a painting of the 1604 Somerset House conference, which resulted in a peace treaty between England and Spain (NPG 665).

In recognition of his successful negotiation at this event, Sackville was given a pension, a ring, and a chain from Philip III of Spain (r.1598-1621).<sup>13</sup> The image of Sackville, in his sombre dark dress, is not one of a man who was excessive in his apparel. Yet he still owned and valued a significant number of jewels. These items, therefore, must have retained some value that outweighed their ornamental and aesthetic worth. Sackville's will is dated 11 August 1607 and he died the following year on 19 April. There are many bequests of jewels given to Sackville's close friends that reflect his desire to be remembered by them and show the high esteem with which he regarded these individuals. This rhetoric of remembrance is repeated throughout the will:

Item I giue vnto the reuerend Father in god {blank} Bishopp of London my ~~very~~ deere good Lord and freinde a Ringe of gould enameled blacke wherein is sett an Emerald of the olde Myne vppon a foyle being tabled longe wise. Desiring hys Lordshipp to weare it & keepe it> as a Remembraunce of my hartie love vnto hym.<sup>14</sup>

It is clear from the jewelled bequests made by Sackville that he was in possession of a large and fine jewellery collection. He left a significant number to his wife, Cicely (d.1615), whom he made joint executor along with his heir, Robert Sackville, second earl of Dorset (1560/1-1609).<sup>15</sup> Of all the jewels received by Cicely, the most interesting to note are those pieces that Sackville states were originally for his personal use, two of which are detailed here.

Also I do giue will and bequeathe vnto her out of those Jewelles of gould pearle and pretious stone which I keepe and reserue as Jewelles for my selfe and to myne owne priuat vse during my life these twoe Jewelles folowing that is to saye: One Rope of fayer round orient and greate pearle conteyning the number of one hundred and three score pearle having a Carnation Rybben silke lace sewed to eache end of the sayed Rope. And one other Jewell of gould made into the fashion of a Crosse or Crucifix beyng on the one syde sett with twelue greate Dyamondes, whereof one Diamond set in the Toppe is a faier greate Table Diamond And twoe other Diamonds set on the sydes ar[e] fayer greate Triangle Diamonds And one other Diamond set ~~on~~ <in> the

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<sup>13</sup> Rivkah Zim, 'Sackville, Thomas, first Baron Buckhurst and first earl of Dorset (c.1536–1608)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Oct 2009 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24450, accessed 19 July 2010]. The ring and chain are discussed in Sackville's will.

<sup>14</sup> "Will of Thomas Sackville", 31 January 1609, The National Archives PROB 11/113/1, ff.2r-26r, f.15v.

<sup>15</sup> In a codicil appended to the will, Sackville then declares his wife Cicely as his sole executor – "Will of Thomas Sackville", f.17v.

lower parte of the sayed Jewell is a very faire and great Triangle Dyamond. And sixe other Diamonds which make the Crosse in the myddest ar[e] faier greate Table Dyamonds one of them beyng muche longer than the other fyve. The other syde of the saied Jewell beyng faire enameled with diuers coloures: And which sayed Jewell hath three faire greate peare pearles pendant to the same. Both which sayed Jewelles I do fullie and absolutely giue will and bequeathe vnto my said most Deereleie beloved wife.<sup>16</sup>

The pendant cross described above, with its twelve diamonds, three pear-shaped pearls, and intricate enamelling, is an elaborate example of a personal devotional jewel. A comparable piece listed within the inventory of the jewels of Vincenzo Gonzaga (1562-1612) is described as having a cross of diamonds with four rubies and two large pearls.<sup>17</sup> Similar pieces are recorded by Hans Mielich (1516-1573) in the inventory of jewels belonging to Anna of Austria (1528-1590) and her husband Albrecht V (1528-1579), duke of Bavaria (figs.10.3-10.4).



Figure 10.3: Manuscript illumination showing the obverse and reverse of a gold and enamelled pendant cross set with table-cut and triangular diamonds with three pear-shaped pearls hanging pendant; Hans Mielich, 1552-1556.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> "Will of Thomas Sackville", ff.3v-4r.

<sup>17</sup> Paola Venturelli, *Le Collezioni Gonzaga: Cammei, Cristalli, Pietre Dure, Oreficerie, Cassettine, Stipetti: Intorno All'elenco Dei Beni Del 1626-1627 Da Guglielmo a Vincenzo II Gonzaga* (Cinisello Balsamo (Milan): Silvana, 2005), fig.38.

<sup>18</sup> BSB Cod.icon. 429 (Munich, 1552-1556), ff.34r-v, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich and referred to hereinafter as *Hans Mielich Inventory*. Accessible online at <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.wdl/demnbsb.4104>.



Figure 10.4: Manuscript illumination of obverse and reverse of a gold and enamelled pendant cross set with table-cut and point-cut diamonds, with three pear-shaped pearls hanging pendant; Hans Mielich, 1552-1556.<sup>19</sup>

There are a number of extant pieces of similar form, though since they incorporate comparatively cheaper materials they are far less grand than Sackville's jewel. Within the collections of both the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum are two not too dissimilar gold cross pendants set with the semi-precious stone turquoise (figs.10.5-10.6). Both are enamelled to the reverse and according to the authors Hugh Tait and Charlotte Gere 'the quality of the enamelling and the palette' on the British Museum piece suggest that it is of English manufacture.<sup>20</sup> The cross in the Victoria and Albert Museum is probably of French origin and was made in about 1630. An object that perhaps approaches more closely the type of jewel described by Sackville in his will is a Spanish example from the early part of the seventeenth century (fig.10.7). Composing a more stylised version of a pendant cross and set with table-cut crystals, rather than diamonds, it gives some indication of how grand Sackville's cross must have been.

<sup>19</sup> *Hans Mielich Inventory*, ff.36r-v.

<sup>20</sup> Charlotte Gere and Hugh Tait, *The Art of the Jeweller: A Catalogue of the Hull Grundy Gift to the British Museum: Jewellery, Engraved Gems and Goldsmiths' Work*, 2 vols. (London: British Museum Publications, 1984), vol.1, cat. no. 282.





Figure 10.5: Gold pendant cross set with cabochon-cut turquoises with *basse-taille* enamelling to reverse; England; late-sixteenth century. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe 1978,10-2.115.



Figure 10.6: Gold pendant reliquary cross set with turquoises and hung with pearls with enamelling to reverse; France; c.1630. Victoria and Albert Museum, M.127-1975.



Figure 10.7: Gold pendant cross set with table-cut crystals and with enamelled decoration; Spain; 1600-1625. Victoria and Albert Museum, M.128-1975.

All three pieces are suggestive of the form of Sackville's cross, with the two terminals and base being hung with pendant elements. It is not surprising that an individual of the status and wealth of Sackville would choose to own a religious jewel with such a high intrinsic material value. The inclusion of expensive materials was clearly an overt declaration of his social position. The rhetoric employed throughout the description highlights the worth assigned to the diamonds and pearls: the repeated use of 'fair' and 'great' indicates both qualitative and quantitative importance.

That Sackville had great admiration and respect for his wife is evident throughout this will, for he repeatedly refers to her as his 'dearly beloved wife', and so the significance of these two gifts is not to be underestimated. These bequests demonstrate clearly at once the importance of both the recipient, in this case Cicely, and the bequeathed goods. The possession and use of a pendant cross by Sackville is not altogether unsurprising or inappropriate for a man described by the modern scholar Rivkah Zim as someone who 'upheld and promoted the religion of the established Elizabethan church'.<sup>21</sup> What is perhaps surprising, however, is the rope of pearls. Composed of one hundred and sixty orient pearls, this was a substantial piece of jewellery. The pearl had come to signify the purity of Elizabeth (r.1558-1603) and also England's dominance towards the final years of the sixteenth century.<sup>22</sup> Both traits are visualised by the iconic 'Armada' portrait of 1588 attributed to George Gower (d.1596). There is little, if any, pictorial evidence that depicts men in pearl necklaces and although there are numerous entries within Henry VIII's inventory of such ropes of pearls, this type of jewel was more often associated with women.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, Sackville asserts in his will that this item of jewellery was for his 'owne priuat vse'.

While the jewels that Sackville leaves to his wife Cicely reflect the status of both the gift and the recipient, four of his jewelled possessions seem to have far greater importance. Sackville writes that these four jewels 'I keepe and reserve as Jewelles for meselfe' and he bequeaths them to his 'welbeloued sonne Robert Lorde Buckhurst after my Decease for and during his life only'.<sup>24</sup> Sackville then describes in some detail each of these four objects.

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<sup>21</sup> Rivkah Zim, "Religion and the Politic Counsellor: Thomas Sackville, 1536-1608", *English Historical Review* CXXII, no. 498 (Sept 2007): 892-917, p.893. The article explores the religious stance of Sackville in a period when the terms 'Protestant' and 'Catholic' were subject to multiple meanings in his time.

<sup>22</sup> Karen Raber, "Chains of Pearls: Gender, Property, Identity" in *Ornamentalism: The Art of Renaissance Accessories*, edited by M. Bella Mirabella, 159-181 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011), p.159.

<sup>23</sup> Raber states that while men did incorporate pearls into their clothing, lengths of pearls draped around the neck were more the reserve of English noblewomen – Raber, "Chains of Pearls", p.165.

<sup>24</sup> "Will of Thomas Sackville", f.11r.



1. One ringe of gould enamelled blacke and set round ouer all the whole Rynge with Diamondes to the number of twentie whereof fyve Diamondes beyng placed in the vppermost parte of the sayed Rynge do represent the fashion of a Crosse and the other fyteene ar[e] sett rounde and ouer all the saied Rynge.
2. One picture of the late famous Quene Elizabeth being cutt out of an Aggett with excellent similitude ovall fashion and sett in gould with twentie sixe Rubies abowte the Circle of the same. And one orient peare pearle pendant to the same.
3. One Ringe of gould enameled blacke, wherein is set a greate Table Diamonde beyng perfect and pure and of muche worthe.
4. One chayne of gould Spanishe worke conteyninge in it fortie eighte seuerall peeces of gould of Diuers sortes enameled white and fortie sixe ouall lynkes of goulde likewise enameled white, whereof twelue of the biggest sorte of the sayed fortie eight peeces beyng also enameled white haue likewise in euery <one> of them twoe Diamondes and<sup>25</sup> so in all one hundred fortie fower Diamondes ouer and besides fortie sixe ouall linkes of gould which do houlde and knytt the sayed peeces and them selues together in forme of a Cheyne.<sup>26</sup>

Crucially, each object is prefaced by the phrase ‘the sole vse and occupation onlie’. This means that although they were bequeathed to Sackville’s heir Robert, they were not to become his actual property for him to dispose of as he wished. In fact Sackville makes this explicit by asserting that Robert was to have these jewels ‘during his life only’. Sackville’s testamentary instructions do not end with his son and heir Robert. He continues by making clear his wishes that following Robert’s death these four jewels were to be passed onto *his* eldest son and heir, Richard Sackville (1589-1624), third earl of Dorset, ‘for and during his life onlie’. Following this named bequest to his grandson Sackville then expresses what is to happen to the two gold, enamelled, and diamond-set rings, the gold chain, and the agate jewel depicting Elizabeth I.

And after his Decease then vnto the next heire male begotten of the bodye of the saied Richard Sacvill my neiphue for and during his life onlie. And so from heire male to heire male of the Sacuilles after the Decease of euery one of them seuerally and successiuelie for and during the life and liues onlie of euery suche heire male seuerallie and successiuelie chardging and earnestlie requiring all and euery my saied heire males before specified.<sup>27</sup>

By his will, then, Sackville sought to establish these jewels as family heirlooms. He even makes this intention explicit: ‘the saied two ringes picture and chayne of gould intended

<sup>25</sup> RH marginalia: ‘fashioned like the true SS haue in euerie one of them The diamondes good other twelue of a lesser sorte of the said fortie eight peeces being fashioned ouall wise haue in euery one of them two diamondes and twentie fower peeces of a saied lesser sorte of the said fortie eighte peeces being’.

<sup>26</sup> "Will of Thomas Sackville", f.11r.

<sup>27</sup> "Will of Thomas Sackville", f.11r.

by me to remayne as our heiriloom to the house and familie of the Sacvilles'.<sup>28</sup> His son Robert died only ten months after him on 27 February 1609 and his will is dated to 10 February 1608.<sup>29</sup> In this, Robert acknowledges the terms of his father's will that relate specifically to the four jewels that Sackville wished to be passed successively along his male line.<sup>30</sup>

Not only is Sackville's will interesting for the concern that it shows he had in desiring to bestow upon future generations of his family items of jewellery that he wore and that were undoubtedly important to him, but this document also reveals why these four objects were held in such esteem. First he discusses the gold ring that is set with twenty diamonds.

In the begynning of the monethe of June one thowsand sixe hundred and seven This Ringe thus sett with twentie Diamondes as is aforesayed was sent vnto me from my most gracious souraigne Kinge James by that honorable personage the Lord Hays one of the gentlemen of his highnes Bedchamber the Courte then beyng at Whitehall in London and I at that tyme remaining at Horsely House in Surrey twentie myles from London where I laye in suche extremitie of sicknes as it was a Common and <a> Constant Reporte ouer all London that I was dead and the same confidentlie affirmed euen vnto the kinges highnes hymselfe. vppon which occasion it pleased his most excellent maiestie in token of his gracious goodnes and greate favoure towardes me to send the saied Lord Hay with the saied Ringe and this Royall message vnto me namelie that his highnes wished a speedie and a perfect recouerye of my healthe with all happie and good Successe vnto me, and that I might liue as long as the Dyamonds of that Rynge (which therewithall he Deliuered vnto me) did indure. And in token thereof required me to weare it and keepe it for his sake. This most gracious and comfortable message restored a newe life vnto me as coming from so renowned and benigne a Soueraigne vnto a Seruaunte so farre vnworthie of so greate a favoure.<sup>31</sup>

Following this detailed account Sackville then proceeds to explain briefly the circumstance of his receipt of the other three jewels intended as heirloom pieces. The 'sayed picture was bequeathed' by his 'Sister the Ladie Anne Dacres [...] as a speciall remembrance of her Love'.<sup>32</sup> It would appear that this image of the late Queen Elizabeth was a particularly fitting gift for Sackville, since he had 'receyued from her maiestie many speciall graces and favoures', including being made a Knight of the Order of the Garter and a member of the

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<sup>28</sup> "Will of Thomas Sackville", f.11r.

<sup>29</sup> "Will of Robert Sackville", 11 March 1609, The National Archives, PROB 11/113/212.

<sup>30</sup> Arthur Collins, *The English Baronage: Or an Historical Account of the Lives and Most Memorable Actions of Our Nobility; with Their Descents, Marriages, and Issue. Deduc'd from Records, Historians, Manuscripts, and Other Authorities* (London: printed for Robert Gosling, 1727), p.448.

<sup>31</sup> "Will of Thomas Sackville", f.11v.

<sup>32</sup> "Will of Thomas Sackville", f.12r.

Privy Council, but to name only two.<sup>33</sup> The second ring set with a single table-cut diamond and the gold chain were also royal gifts and were given as thanks for the role that Sackville played in the Somerset House Conference.

Likewise the sayed Rynge of gould with the greate Table Diamond sett therein togeather with the saied Cheyne of gould Spanishe worke and with a hundred fortie fower Diamondes therein set were allso giuen vnto me by the Kinge of Spayne I beyng then a Commissioner Deputed with other by my most gracious Soveraigne Kinge James at his first Entrance into this Kingdome for the Conclusion of the peace betwixt my saied renowned Soveraigne of the one parte and the saied Kinge of Spayne and the Archdukes of th[e] other parte.<sup>34</sup>

While the descriptions in Sackville's will of these jewels show that these were lavish creations, made of valuable materials, it would seem that their significance and true worth lay in the nature of the giver and the circumstances of the giving. By recounting how he came to be in possession of these jewels, particularly the ring from James I (r.1603-1625) and the ring and chain from Philip III of Spain, Sackville wished presumably to ensure that each object was endowed with a worth far greater than its intrinsic monetary value. Each jewel marked a relationship that Sackville had formed in his lifetime and which he wished his heirs to remember. In creating these heirloom jewels, not only did he intend to keep ownership of these important objects within his family, but also he wished to keep a remembrance of himself alive in the minds of his descendents.

## 10.2 The Lyte Jewel

The final piece to be discussed is the Lyte Jewel, which like Sir Thomas Sackville's possessions provides a concrete example of the complex layer of meaning in men's jewellery (fig.10.8). Its survival since the early-seventeenth century makes it remarkable but its interest lies also in the layers of meaning that it acquired when it was produced and as it passed through generations of members of the Lyte family.

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<sup>33</sup> "Will of Thomas Sackville", f.12r.

<sup>34</sup> "Will of Thomas Sackville", f.12v.



Figure 10.8: The Lyte Jewel; gold, enamelled, and diamond-set pendant jewel with miniature on vellum by Nicholas Hilliard; England; 1610. British Museum, Prehistory and Europe WB.167.

Now in the collections of the British Museum this pendant jewel was originally presented to the relatively unknown genealogist Thomas Lyte (1568-1638) of Lytes Cary, Somerset by James I in recognition of the genealogy ‘in ritche coulours’ created for him by his subject.<sup>35</sup> An uncoloured pen-and-ink version of the genealogical tree from Lytes Cary which remained with the family for centuries now survives in the British Library.<sup>36</sup> While it is probably smaller in size than the version presented to the king, a feat which took about seven years to produce, its scale (1.89 x 2.12 m) and detail nevertheless give some sense of the undertaking of such a work. The illuminated genealogy traces James I’s ancestry back to Brutus of Troy, the mythical founder of Britain. The early years of James’ reign were spent trying to legitimise his claims to the throne and so the public presentation of the genealogy before the court at the Palace of Whitehall on 12 July 1610 was a highly significant political move.<sup>37</sup>

The Lyte Jewel contains a miniature of James I by the limner Nicholas Hilliard (c.1537-1619). This is hidden within a gold and enamelled locket with an openwork cover and frame, set with table-cut diamonds. The cover bears the royal monogram ‘IR’, while the reverse of the locket is enamelled. It measures 6.5 x 4.8 cm and weighs a substantial 50.3 grams. It was given to Thomas Lyte as a form of thanks for his creation and supposedly

<sup>35</sup> "Britaines Monarchie", 1605, British Library, Additional MS 59741 cited in Tait, *Catalogue*, vol.1, p.183. Lyte’s father was Henry Lyte (1529?-1607), author of *The Light of Britayne: a Recorde of the Honorable Originall and Antiquitie of Britaine* (1588), a copy of which was presented to Elizabeth I in November 1588 when she went to St Paul’s to give thanks for success in the Armada campaign. Tait speculates whether Thomas Lyte’s interest in the subject of genealogy was fostered by his father’s work – Tait, *Catalogue*, vol.1, p.179 and G.S. Boulger and Anita McConnell, "Lyte, Henry (1529?-1607)" in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. Online ed. edited by Lawrence Goldman – <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17301>, accessed 19 September 2012).

<sup>36</sup> "The Lyte Pedigree", British Library, Additional MS 48343. Also illustrated in Hugh Tait, *Catalogue of the Waddesdon Bequest in the British Museum: The Jewels*, 3 vols. (London: British Museum Press, 1986), vol.1, figs.162-164.

<sup>37</sup> Tait, *Catalogue*, vol.1, pp.179, 183-87.

spontaneous, though presumably highly mediated, presentation at Court.<sup>38</sup> This symbol of royal favour was so significant that less than a year later Lyte's portrait was painted, in which he proudly wears the jewel on a red ribbon, providing a secure dating for the jewel to between July 1610 and April 1611 (fig.10.9).



Figure 10.9: Portrait of Thomas Lyte; England; unknown artist; dated 14 April 1611. Museum of Somerset, Taunton, 108/1998.

The inclusion of the Lyte Jewel within the portrait is highly significant. In fact, the jewel may have provided the main impetus for the painting's creation. For it is the pendant, above all else, that contains the narrative. The portrait served as a commemoration of the jewel, recording it for posterity. For the jewel served to enhance the status of both giver and receiver: James I showed his magnanimity to a loyal subject; while Lyte, by no means a prominent individual, had been privy to royal favour. Both the portrait and the pendant jewel remained within the family until the nineteenth century and the eighteenth-century will of a later Thomas Lyte refers to both objects, showing that even almost one hundred and fifty years later the significance of both was understood.

<sup>38</sup> For information on the intellectual context of this object and its transfer from James I to Lyte see Jonathan Bate and Dora Thornton, *Shakespeare: Staging the World* (London: The British Museum Press, 2012), pp.208-11.

I also give unto my said daughter, Silvestra Blackwell, during her life, the possession and use of my great grandfather's picture, and of the jewell which is set round with diamonds, and hath also some other diamonds on the top thereof, and in the inside hath the picture of King James the First – the same being given by him to my said great grandfather – and of which jewell there is also a picture under my said great grandfather's picture. And my will and desire is that the said jewell and my great grandfather's picture may after my said daughter's death go and remain for the use of her daughters successively and their respective issue, the elder and her issue first to enjoy the same: and if both my said grandchildren shall die without issue, I then give the said jewell and picture unto my nephew John Lyte, only son of my nephew Thomas Lyte of Lytescary in the said county of Somerset and his heirs forever.<sup>39</sup>

The portrait was retained by the family until it was sold at Sotheby's on 3 February 1960.<sup>40</sup> It was eventually purchased by its present owner, the Museum of Somerset in Taunton, from the National Portrait Gallery, London in 1960. The pendant jewel was sold in the nineteenth century and eventually became a part of the Duke of Hamilton's collection from which it was sold at the Hamilton Palace Sale in 1882.<sup>41</sup> It was later acquired by Baron Ferdinand Rothschild (1839-1898) and eventually bequeathed to the British Museum, forming a part of the Waddesdon Bequest.<sup>42</sup>

The survival of any jewel in its original form is remarkable. The Lyte Jewel may have survived intact thanks to both its royal connection and through its immortalisation within Lyte's portrait.<sup>43</sup> Whenever jewels were bequeathed, the owner was making an overt statement about their non-monetary worth. In bequeathing jewels, these items continued to have meaning beyond their 'first life'. All the preceding chapters have demonstrated the importance of jewellery for a man in the early modern period. Men owned jewels and through them it is possible to mark out the relationships that a man cultivated during his lifetime. These varied relationships were but just one manifestation of masculinity. Jewellery embellished the clothing of men and, while it was a tricky path to negotiate, a man's outward appearance reflected on his inner self.

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<sup>39</sup> "Will of Thomas Lyte, Gentleman of Saint Clement Danes, Middlesex", 16 November 1748, The National Archives, PROB 11/765/541 cited in Tait, *Catalogue*, vol.1, p.177.

<sup>40</sup> Tait, *Catalogue*, vol.1, p.179.

<sup>41</sup> Tait, *Catalogue*, vol.1, p.177.

<sup>42</sup> Tait, *Catalogue*, vol.1, p.177. The Waddesdon Bequest was left to the British Museum by Baron Ferdinand Rothschild in 1898 and it comprises of almost three hundred items once contained in the 'New Smoking Room' at Waddesdon Manor, Buckinghamshire. The collection contains the types of objects that would have suited a Renaissance *Kunst- or Schatzkammer*. For more on the Waddesdon Bequest see Hugh Tait, *Waddesdon Bequest: The Legacy of Baron Ferdinand Rothschild to the British Museum* (London: British Museum Press, 1981) and Dora Thornton, "From Waddesdon to the British Museum: Baron Ferdinand Rothschild and His Cabinet Collection", *Journal of the History of Collections* 13, no. 2 (2001): 191-213.

<sup>43</sup> It is evident from the portrait that a trilobed drop set with diamonds hung originally at the base of the pendant. At some point in the nineteenth century a pendant pearl was added as a replacement following this loss. This was later removed to preserve the integrity of the jewel. See Tait, *Catalogue*, vol.1, p.174.

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## Appendix A

### Jewellery from the *Girona* shipwreck consulted at the Ulster Museum

The following table gives physical descriptions and dimensions of the objects within the collections of the Ulster Museum, Belfast that came from the shipwreck of the galleass, the *Girona*, which sank in 1588. The objects were discovered in 1967 by the Belgian archaeologist, Robert Sténuît and gifted to the Ulster Museum. Additionally, there is a pendant which was acquired later by the Ulster Museum which appears to have strong associations with the Spanish Armada. Many of these objects are on permanent display, though a number of these are in store. These items were all consulted during a study trip in November 2010. Catalogue references correspond to the numbering system used in Laurence Flanagan, *Ireland's Armada Legacy* (Dublin & Gloucester: Gill and Macmillan & Alan Sutton, 1988). Images follow the table.

Museum No.	Cat. Ref.	Object Name	Material	Description	Weight (g)	Width (mm)	Height (mm)	Depth (mm)	Length (mm)	Diameter (mm)
A1.1990	n/a	Pendant	Gold; enamel; ruby; emerald; amethyst; pearl	Oval-shaped red and green enamelled gold disc with the image of Madonna and Child surrounded by a rayed border placed in a later setting with the Madonna and Child bordered by an inscription in italics 'When Spanneshe fleet fled home for feeare [ANNO] This golden picktur then was founde * Fast fexsed vnto Spanniards eare [1588] Whoo drowned laye on Irish groūd x' which still has visible traces of black enamel within. The reverse of the Marian image is set with an octagonal amethyst, the setting of which is inscribed 'The first gift to Mary'. The central stone is surrounded by four emeralds, between which is lozenge decoration with traces of enamel. There is scrollwork decoration to the top of the pendant, to which is attached a suspension loop. To the bottom is a fleur-de-lys to which is attached a pearl. The colours present in the surviving enamelled decoration are white, blue, red and green.		30.34	59.72			
BGR 1	13.1	Pendant	Gold; ruby; enamel	Pendant in the form of a salamander with four legs, two wings, and a curved tail. The eyes, teeth, mouth, nose, and scales are clearly defined. The reptile's back was at one time set with nine rubies in the form of a cross; only three of the stones survive towards the base of the cross. There are traces of white enamel to the teeth and on the back. The underside of the pendant is decorated, replicating the scales of the animal and at the ends of both wings are	15.6	32.33 (max)		5.16	42.35	

				attached suspension loops; to one the link of a chain is still present. According to Flanagan a gold chain with a ruby-set mount was at one time attached (not seen).						
BGR 2	13.2	Pendant cross	Gold; enamel	Cross of the Order of St. John, also known as a Maltese Cross, in two pieces (a = large section; b = small section). Each arm terminates in two points, and between each arm is a floral motif. The top of the cross terminates in a suspension loop, to which is attached a coil of gold wire. The surface of the cross is keyed for enamelling - very small traces of white enamel survive.	33.5; 24.7 (a); 8.7 (b)		72.62 (inc. loop and gold coil)	3.53		
BGR 3	13.3	Pendant cross	Gold	Oval-shaped cross of the Order of Alcantara in the form of a receptacle. The frame contains a cross with each arm terminating in a fleur-de-lys. The top of the frame has a small suspension loop at the top. The back panel is inserted and has an engraved image of a bearded saint with a tree in the background (St Julian and a pear-tree). The image has been keyed for enamelling.	10.3	24.21	28.61; 32.51 (inc. loop)	8.08		
BGR 4	12.5	Reliquary	Gold	Reliquary in the form of a book, the top cover of which is a hinged lid decorated with relief ornament of foliate motifs in the centre of which is a rectangular panel enclosed in pillars and containing the etched figure of St John the Baptist. Once opened the inside of the container reveals five circular compartments and a raised rectangular form, which corresponds to a receptacle accessed from the back 'cover'. The circular forms were found with small wax tablets ( <i>Agnus Dei</i> ). The back cover	48.3	32.43	38.76 (not loops or chain)	9.52		

				and hinge have similar relief decoration as the top cover. To the top are two suspension loops, to which fragments of a chain remain.						
BGR 5 & BGR 5a	13.25 (5a - n/a)	Mount	Gold; lapis lazuli; pearl; enamel	Set of twelve cameo mounts of Roman emperors for a necklace or collar, as suggested from two rings on reverse of each, one to top and one to bottom (seen on one). BGR 5a was discovered in 1998. Original design is lapis lazuli cameo mount set in gold frame with openwork design to top and bottom. A grotesque mask sits at the top of the frame and to the sides are settings with some traces of green enamel. Below this fine gold wire holds four pearls on each side. Cameos held in place by a backplate supported by triangular teeth. Ordering: left to right, top row (A-D); left to right, middle row (E-H); left to right, bottom row (I-L). A: lapis lazuli cameo, three pearls, traces of white and green enamel; B: lapis lazuli cameo, six pearls, traces of green enamel; C: lapis lazuli cameo, eight pearls, traces of green enamel; D: lapis lazuli cameo, eight pearls, traces of green and white enamel; E: traces of green enamel; F: lapis lazuli cameo, one pearl, traces of green enamel; G: lapis lazuli cameo, two pearls, traces of green and white (?) enamel; H: lapis lazuli cameo, one pearl, traces of green and white enamel; I: traces of green enamel; J: no back plate; K: two pearls, traces of green and white enamel and bottom of frame missing; L: one pearl, traces of green enamel.	F - 10.87	A: 27.57; B: 28.05; C: 26.90; D: 27.62; E: 27.25; F: 25.49; G: 24.73; H: 26.82; I: 27.45; J: 25.56; K: 26.46; L: 25.96	A: 39.97; B: 42.29; C: 40.58; D: 41.90; E: 41.14; F: 40.77; G: 39.87; H: 40.69; I: 41.52; J: 41.59; K: 33.30; L: 40.44			

BGR 6	13.11	Ring	Gold	Flat-section hoop terminating at the bezel on one side with a buckle and on the other side a hand holding a heart. The outer face is inscribed in Roman capitals 'NO TENGO MAS QVE DAR TE', the ground is either punctuated by small pellets or has been keyed for enamelling.	2.4		2.43 (hoop); 5.42 (bezel)			20.34 (sides of hoop); 19.00 (bezel to base)
BGR 7	13.13	Ring	Gold; enamel?	D-section hoop which broadens at shoulders to rectangular bezel with setting for a gemstone (missing). The bezel is damaged significantly at its base. The reverse of the bezel has two triangular sections of scrollwork decoration, in which there are possible surviving traces of white enamel. The hoop is inscribed to the outer face in Roman capitals 'MADAME DE CHAMPAGNEY. MD XX IIII'.	5.9		2.03 (hoop); 7.99 (shoulders, poss. similar to bezel height)			24.19 (sides of hoop); 26.93 (bezel to base)
BGR 8	12.4	Ring	Gold	Gold hoop which broadens at shoulders to large circular bezel, engraved with the sacred monogram 'IHS' with the 'H' surmounted by a cross and below which is a nail from the Cross. The shoulders of the ring are engraved with simple linear decoration.	6.5	17.78 (bezel)	16.80 (bezel)	6.06 (bezel)		24.32 (sides of hoop); 26.57 (bezel to base)
BGR 9	13.15	Ring	Gold	D-section hoop decorated with rectangular sections filled with a lozenge in low relief to outer surface. Hoop broadens at shoulders to a setting for a single stone on each, to a bezel with one large setting and four smaller ones. There is a possible fragment of either a ruby or amethyst in one of the smaller bezel settings. Badly damaged.	3.9		1.68 (hoop)			25.17 (bezel to base); 18.19 (at shoulders)



BGR 10	13.12	Ring	Gold	Flat-section hoop which broadens at shoulders decorated with small human head, to a rectangular bezel that has been applied with a salamander in the round. The hoop is slightly twisted at the base.	3.1		1.61 (hoop); 5.21 (bezel)			19.91 (sides of hoop); 23.62 (bezel to base)
BGR 11	13.16	Ring	Gold; enamel?	Ring with badly-crushed bezel which has setting for one central stone and four others, none of which survives. The hoop, which broadens at the shoulders, is decorated with alternating ovals and lozenges in low relief. There are possibly very slight traces of white and black (?) enamel.	5.2		1.45 (hoop at base); 3.40 (hoop at shoulders)			20.45 (sides of hoop)
BGR 12	13.14	Ring	Gold; diamond	Flat-section hoop which broadens at shoulders. Each shoulder has three settings, which at one time held table-cut gemstones - in one a diamond survives. The bezel is now crushed but once held four gemstones and now only one diamond survives. This diamond is faceted and three faces are showing. There is engraved decoration to the top and bottom of the shoulders, though this is now badly worn.	5.8	9.99 (bezel)	1.32 (hoop); 3.42 (max of shoulders); 4.51 (bezel)			23.51 (sides of hoop); 25.06 (bezel to base)
BGR 13	13.17	Ring	Gold	Plain d-section hoop with shoulders that broaden to terminate behind the rectangular bezel. Reverse of bezel has lines radiating from the centre to its edge. The bezel once contained a single gemstone bordered by pellet decoration. There is some redness to the front and reverse of the bezel. Badly damaged.	4.8		1.78		28.65	

BGR 14a	13.19	Dress- ornament	Gold; ruby; pearl; enamel?	Oval-shaped openwork ornament of foliate motifs. In the centre is a central raised rectangular setting in which survives a ruby. To either side of this collet is a pearl held in place by means of a gold wire. At either side is an integral loop for attachment to clothing or a hat. Possibly traces of white enamel. Flanagan says element of a composite chain.	F - 5.58	27.77	21.92			
BGR 14b	13.19	Dress- ornament	Gold; pearl	Oval-shaped openwork ornament of foliate motifs. In the centre is a central raised rectangular setting for a gemstone, which is missing. To either side of this collet is a pearl held in place by means of a gold wire. At either side is an integral loop for attachment to a hat or clothing. Flanagan says element of a composite chain.	F - 5.58	25.80	21.61			
BGR 15	13.20	Mount	Gold	Mount in the form of an oval frame surrounded by a relief floral and decorative border. Four flowers have been applied to the frame by means of rivets, which are visible from the reverse. Within this a raised oval collar with pellet decoration has been soldered.	11.4	24.59		4.19	29.56	
BGR 15 (?)	13.20 (?)	Mount	Gold	Mount in the form of a circular frame surrounded by relief floral and decorative border, similar to BGR 15 so possibly assigned the same registration number. Four flowers have been applied to the four corners of the frame, presumably by means of a rivet (not seen). Within this a raised oval collar with pellet decoration has been soldered. Three triangular teeth attached to this survive and possibly held a cameo or intaglio.		19.52	19.51			

BGR 16a (?)	13.22	Mount	Gold	One of a set of three small oval mounts in the form of a frame with chased ornament. Triangular teeth survive.	F - 2.54	21.93	27.30			
BGR 16b (?)	13.22	Mount	Gold	One of a set of three small oval mounts in the form of a frame with chased ornament. Triangular teeth survive.	F - 2.54	21.53 (folded at sides)	25.64			
BGR 16c (?)	13.22	Mount	Gold	One of a set of three small oval mounts in the form of a frame with chased ornament. Triangular teeth survive.	F - 2.54	26.19	29.01			
BGR 17a	13.21	Mount	Gold	One of a set of six small oval mounts in the form of a frame with openwork border decorated with pellets. Triangular teeth survive and may have once held a cameo or intaglio.	F - 2.14	23.68	24.54			
BGR 17b	13.21	Mount	Gold	One of a set of six small oval mounts in the form of a frame with openwork border decorated with pellets. Triangular teeth survive.	F - 2.14	20.71	22.85			
BGR 17c	13.21	Mount	Gold	One of a set of six small oval mounts in the form of a frame with openwork border decorated with pellets. Triangular teeth survive.	F - 2.14	20.16	22.84			
BGR 17d	13.21	Mount	Gold	One of a set of six small oval mounts in the form of a frame with openwork border decorated with pellets. Triangular teeth survive.	1.9	18.99	19.72	2.16		
BGR 17e	13.21	Mount	Gold	One of a set of six small oval mounts in the form of a frame with openwork border decorated with pellets. Triangular teeth survive.	1.5	20.78	19.49	2.23		
BGR 17f	13.21	Mount	Gold	One of a set of six small oval mounts in the form of a frame with openwork border decorated with pellets. Triangular teeth survive.	1.7	20.10	20.52	2.21		

BGR 18	13.26	Tooth- and ear- pick	Gold	Combined tooth- and earpick in the form of a dolphin, the long snout being the part used as a toothpick, and the flattened tail constituting the earpick. The eye has been modelled in detail, suggesting the body once had more detail which has now worn. Currently in three pieces (a = head; b = body; c = tail).	8.7; 4.6 (a); 3.4 (b); 0.5 (c)	12.67 (a); 6.82 (b, max); 2.27 (b, min); 4.92 (c)		3.35 (a); 2.01 (b); 1.44 (c)	18.86 (a); 26.92 (b); 8.27 (c)	
BGR 19	13.18	Chain	Gold	Nine elements of a chain formed of three types of composite parts. Type 1: 3 x rectangular shape with openwork chased decoration, with circular opening in centre and on two there is a surviving gold wire, possibly for holding a pearl (top photo: A,B,D). Type 2: 1 x rectangular shape openwork chased decoration, with quatrefoil raised collet to hold a gemstone, which has been attached by means of a rivet (visible on reverse) and has been numbered 'XII' for identification in assembly (top photo: C). Type 3: 5 x narrow rectangular form of openwork decoration with section of loop for attachment (bottom photo: F-J).	A: 2.9; B: 3.4; C: 4.4; D: 4.3; F: 1.4; G: 1.7; H: 1.4; I: 1.8; J: 2.3	A: 21.00; B: 21.67 (inc. loop); C: 24.48; D: 30.65 (inc. attache d piece); F: 15.31; G: 15.05; H: 15.43; I: 15.49; J: 14.65	A: 18.07; B: 17.78; C: 17.65; D: 18.63; F: 8.34; G: 7.93; H: 9.77; I: 12.03; J: 17.52	A: 2.43; B: 3.22; C: 8.80 (inc. collet); D: 2.74; F: 6.18; G: 5.52; H: 4.79; I: 5.19; J: 5.51		

BGR 20	13.24	Mount	Gold; ruby	Very fine mount in the form of an oval frame, now badly damaged. One triangular tooth remains, though it is folded over the frame, originally to hold a cameo in place. Applied scrollwork ornament to edge of frame, in one piece remains a ruby in a round raised setting which is affixed by a rivet (visible on reverse).	2.5	32.17		1.60		
BGR 20 (piece)	13.24	Mount, fragment	Gold; ruby	Part of BGR 20 comprising a ruby in a gold setting with rivet at base for attachment to mount.	0.3	4.25	4.07	3.32		
BGR 20 (piece)	13.24	Mount, fragment	Gold	Part of BGR 20 similar to above but lacking a ruby, therefore just a gold setting for a gemstone with longer rivet at base for attachment.	0.3	4.68	3.65	3.85 (whole ); 2.16 (settin g)		
BGR 20 (piece) (?)	13.24 (?)	Mount, fragment	Gold; enamel (?)	Possibly section of BGR 20, consisting of openwork decoration. Possible traces of white enamel.	0.4	7.95	8.81	1.66		
BGR 22	13.27	Dress- ornament	Gold; enamel	A circular convex ornament, possibly used on dress, of filigree decoration comprised of twelve segments with rounded ends and joined to a central circular frame. Very small traces of red and white enamel are visible, and there is possibly some green enamel. Found folded in two but later straightened to its current form.	1.3			6.19		21.19
BGR 22a	13.28	Dress- ornament, fragment	Gold	Segment from dress-ornament of type BGR 22.	0.2	5.62		0.71	10.04	
BGR 23	13.6	Chain	Gold	Chain formed of oval links. Some links are slightly broken. Flanagan says comprised of 407 links and total length of chain 2330 mm.	768.7	9.71 (link)	9.88 (link)	2.65 (link)		

BGR 24	13.5	Chain	Gold	Chain formed of oval links, some of which are slightly open. Flanagan says comprised of 136 links and total length of chain 1220 mm.	371.6	12.10 (link)	12.67 (link)	2.62 (link)		
BGR 28	13.7	Chain	Gold	Fine chain formed of oval links. Each link is attached to four others. Flanagan says total length of chain 495 mm.	19.1	3.48 (link)	3.75 (link)	0.68 (link)		
BGR 29	13.10	Chain	Gold	Six fragments of a chain, with many of the sections containing knots in the links. Some of the links have been fused together. Each link passes through four others. Flanagan says total length of chain 215+ mm. A: many links distorted; B: reddish tinge to some links; C: section of chain links are flattened and fused together, making chain rigid; D: some links tinged red and many are flattened and fused, end links are broken; E: most of section flattened and fused together, some links have reddish tinge, one end link broken; F: some links flattened and fused, some red tingeing, one end link broken.	A: 10.8; B: 5.7; C: 5.0; D: 3.3; E: 1.7; F: 2.0; total: 28.5	2.72 (link)	4.98 (link)	0.86 (link)		
BGR 30	13.9	Chain	Gold	Very fine gold chain formed of oval links. Each link is attached to four others. Flanagan says total length of chain 808 mm.	13.9	2.45 (link)	3.95 (link)	0.38 (link)		
BGR 31	13.8	Chain	Gold	Chain formed of flattened figure-of-eight links. Flanagan says total length of chain 228 mm.	4.6	3.14 (max of link)	6.19 (link)	0.54 (link)		
BGR 32a	10.1	Button	Gold	One of a set of hollow gold buttons, each somewhat damaged. Each has a small loop for attachment at the top and a small knop at the base. Each decorated in low relief with circular and geometric motifs.	7.2		12.18			14.23

BGR 32b	10.1	Button	Gold	One of a set of hollow gold buttons. See 32a.	4.8		13.30			13.92
BGR 32c	10.1	Button	Gold	One of a set of hollow gold buttons. See 32a. Flattened.	6.8	16.13	17.29			
BGR 32d	10.1	Button	Gold	One of a set of hollow gold buttons. See 32a.	6.4		15.50			12.84
BGR 32e	10.1	Button	Gold	One of a set of hollow gold buttons. See 32a.	5.8		16.52			14.83
BGR 32f	10.1	Button	Gold	One of a set of hollow gold buttons. See 32a.	5.9		18.26			14.02
BGR 32g	10.1	Button	Gold	One of a set of hollow gold buttons. See 32a.	6.9		11.49			14.45
BGR 32h	10.1	Button	Gold	One of a set of hollow gold buttons. See 32a.	6.4		17.98			14.84
BGR 32i	10.1	Button	Gold	One of a set of hollow gold buttons. See 32a. Flattened.	6.7	15.61	16.74			
BGR 32j	10.1	Button	Gold	One of a set of hollow gold buttons. See 32a.	6.8		17.59			14.34
BGR 32k	10.1	Button	Gold	One of a set of hollow gold buttons. See 32a.	6.4		17.63			13.94
BGR 32l	10.1	Button	Gold	One of a set of hollow gold buttons. See 32a.	4.0		12.49			13.61
BGR 32m	10.1	Button	Gold	One of a set of hollow gold buttons. See 32a. Flattened.	3.7	15.13	17.68			
BGR 32n	10.1	Button	Gold	One of a set of hollow gold buttons. See 32a. Flattened.	5.9	16.88	17.97			
BGR 32o	10.1	Button	Gold	One of a set of hollow gold buttons. See 32a. Flattened and broken, so hollow inside visible.	4.3	18.11	18.18			
BGR 32 (?)	10.1 (?)	Button	Gold	Single hollow gold button with loop for attachment at top. Very badly worn surface therefore impossible to discern decorative pattern, but possibly belonging to larger group of fifteen (BGR 32, cat. 10.1).	5.6		12.95			12.12 (max); 9.92 (min)

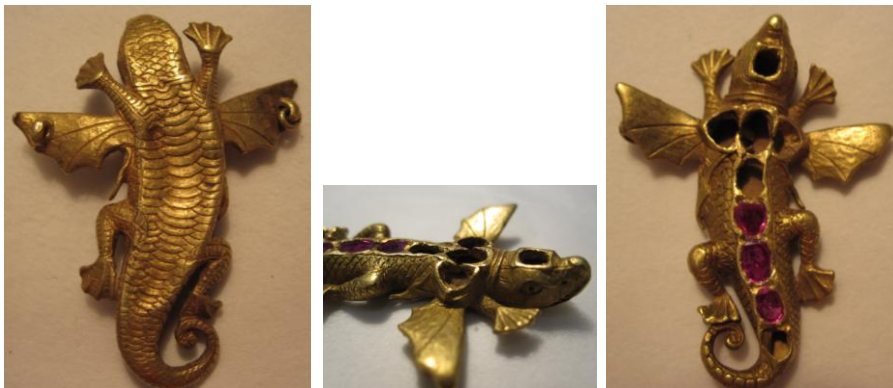
BGR 33	10.2	Button	Gold	Single gold hollow button which is misshapen. Loop for attachment at top and small circular knob at base. Relief decoration of six circles around the circumference each with cross-hatched pattern of three vertical and three horizontal lines within. Six smaller circles each with a cross in the middle sit above and below this middle line. Flanagan says a set of four, but only one seen.	3.6		20.86 (inc. loop)			14.65 (across middle)
BGR 84	9.75	Scent-bottle	Silver; gilding	Fragment of a scent-bottle with slight traces of gliding to the neck. Only neck and a portion of the body survive. The neck is short and terminates in a flat top opening. Remains of the stopper are inside the neck.	33.0				51.94 (of body extant)	23.94 (body, near neck); 13.11 (max. of neck); 19.88 (opening)
BGR 84	9.79	Scent-dropper	Crystal; silver	Hexagonal cross-section length of crystal that tapers to the end. At the top is affixed a silver mount terminating in a circular hoop for attachment to a chain.	2.7	7.28 (max); 4.59 (min)			35.29	
BGR 151	10.14	Buckle	Copper	Rectangular buckle with missing tongue and some evidence of corrosion.	1.7	15.82		3.14	21.37; 14.58 (bar)	
BGR 152	10.13	Buckle	Copper; gilding?	D-shaped buckle with flat underside and possible traces of gilding. The tongue is of circular cross-section with a pointed end and is joined to the bar by means of a loop (not soldered).	3.6	18.53		2.56	24.98; 14.70 (bar); 20.51 (tongue)	



BGR 153	10.12	Buckle	Copper	Bow-shaped buckle with flat, triangular-shaped tongue.	5.8	23.68		2.45	55.08; 31.65 (bar); 18.73 (tongue)	
BGR 431	13.4	Pendant cross	Gold; enamel	Cross of the Order of Santiago consisting of an oval frame within which is a cross in the form of a sword, with the hilt in the form of an inverted heart and the two side arms terminating in fleur-de-lys. The surface of the cross is hatched for enamelling, and some of the red enamel survives. The frame terminates in a loop to which is attached a circular ring.	11.4	24.30	37.71; 42.97 (inc. circular ring)	2.32		
BGR 444 (?)	10.11 (?)	Dress-ornament	Gold	A circular convex ornament, possibly used on dress, with a domed surface and circle hollow in the centre from which radiate eight relief petal shapes. Within these petal-shaped troughs, the surface appears to be keyed for enamelling. (Doubtful whether this is correct cat. no. or reg. no. as Flanagan notes diameter is 14mm and weight is 0.97g).	0.2			2.05		7.48
BGR 450	n/a	Mount	Gold	Oval-shaped gold mount with triangular teeth. Badly damaged but retains some of original decorative openwork chased border. Very fine gold.	1.7	17.00	24.61	1.85		
BGR 451	n/a	Mount	Gold	Circular gold mount with triangular teeth remaining. Note that image shows reverse.	0.6	13.12	16.36	1.95		
unknown	10.3	Button	Gold; enamel	Single gold hollow button with no loop for attachment. Relief decoration to surface of concentric lines, ovals, and pellets. Traces of white and possibly yellow enamel.	4.7		13.87			15.31 (across middle)



A1.1990



BGR 1



BGR 2



BGR 3



BGR 4



BGR 5 & 5a



BGR 6



BGR 7



BGR 8



BGR 9



BGR 10



BGR 11



BGR 12





BGR 13



BGR 14a & b



BGR 15



BGR 15 (?)



BGR 16a-c (?)



BGR 17a-d



BGR 18



BGR 19





BGR 20



BGR 22



BGR 22a



BGR 23



BGR 24



BGR 28



BGR 29





BGR 30



BGR 31



BGR 32a



BGR 32b



BGR 32c



BGR 32d



BGR 32e



BGR 32f



BGR 32g



BGR 32h



BGR 32i



BGR 32j



BGR 32k



BGR 32l



BGR 32m



BGR 32n



BGR 32o

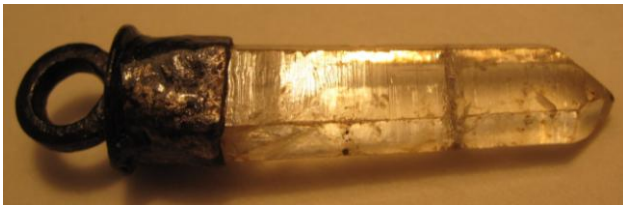


BGR 32 (?)





BGR 33



BGR 84



BGR 151



BGR 152



BGR 153



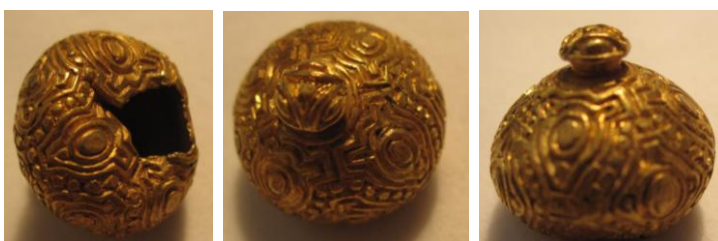
BGR 431



BGR 444 (?)



BGR 450 & 451



Unknown; catalogue reference 10.3

## Appendix B

### British Museum objects

The following table details objects from the collections of the British Museum that have formed the basis of research for this thesis. It has been through the study of these objects that a better understanding of the meanings that jewellery had for men in the early modern period has been formulated.

Object Type	Museum Number	Materials and Techniques	Provenance	Date	Physical Description	Dimensions
Hat ornament	1983,11-2.1	Gold, enamel; applied, enamelled	England	c.1530-1540	Circular medallion with enamelled frame and applied relief figures of Christ and the woman of Samaria at the well, which are attached to the back-plate by means of butterfly clips. Four triangular loops for attachment are at the edge.	Weight = 0.012kg; diameter = 3.30cm
Hat ornament	1955,5-7.1	Gold, enamel; enamelling, applied	probably England	c.1540	Circular plaque with raised border and relief figures showing the scene of the woman of Samaria and Christ at the well. Figures attached by means of butterfly clips. Four triangular loops at edge for attachment. Inscribed on well: ‘+OF.A TREWTHE./*THOW.ART.THE./TREW.MESSIAS’.	Weight = 0.034kg; diameter = 5.82cm (max)
Hat ornament	WB.172	Gold, diamond, emerald, ruby, enamel; chased, enamelled, repoussé.	France	1551-1575	Oval plaque with high relief figures of St George on horseback slaying the dragon. Some parts of relief modelled in the round. Attached by rivets to the back-plate. Background is in low relief. Tubular form frame. Four loops for attachment to back of jewel, arranged diagonally.	Weight = 0.075kg; height = 7.27cm; width = 5.86cm

Hat ornament	WB.171	Gold, diamond, enamel, ruby, garnet (?); enamelled, engraved, repoussé, chased	Italy or Spain	1526-1575	Circular ornament with enamelled relief figures of the Conversion of Saul, surrounded by a tubular frame inscribed in gold lettering on a black enamelled ground 'DVRVM EST TIBI CONTRA STIMVLVM CALCITRARE' with a gold decorative scroll motif separating the words. There are four loops for attachment. The reverse is set with a plain gold disc engraved 'Giojello che teneva al Cappello il Generaliss <sup>o</sup> D. Giovanni d'Austria e che pose di propria mano al Cappello di Camillo Capizucchi come al Libro di memorie della Casa Capizucchi Tom I a C.'	Weight = 0.034kg; diameter = 4.72cm (max)
Hat ornament	WB.152	Gold, peridot, garnet, sapphire, enamel; applied, enamelled	Italy or France	mid 16C	Oval shaped ornament remounted in modern times as a brooch. Shows Paris seated on a peridot handing the apple to Venus who holds Cupid's hand. Behind Paris is Mercury; flying above is a putto; Juno stands covering her breasts; Minerva stands with her head turned away and left hand on her shield, now a sapphire. Frame is later addition of gold set with garnets and almadines.	Weight = 0.035kg; width = 4.84cm; height = 4.15cm
Hat ornament	1915,12-16.298	Bronze, gold; cast, gilded, pierced	Italy	16C	Circular plaque showing the Fall of Phaethon: Phaethon in his chariot; Jupiter; Eridanus; and two nymphs. There are four pierced angled holes on the frame for attachment.	Weight = 0.015kg; diameter = 4.32cm (max)
Hat ornament	1915,12-16.135	Bronze, gold; cast, gilded, pierced	Germany	16C	Circular plaque showing the Judgement of Paris: Paris is sleeping at the foot of a tree; Hermes stands over him; and the three goddesses (Athena, Hera and Aphrodite) are in very low relief in the background.	Weight = 0.018kg; diameter = 3.60cm
Hat ornament	1915,12-16.136	Bronze, gold; cast, gilded, pierced, applied	Italy	16C	Circular plaque with a forward-facing bust of a female figure, possibly the goddess Diana, applied to the backplate by means of a rivet. The border is a shaped floral wreath with trefoils and is pierced seven times.	Weight = 0.015kg; diameter = 3.73cm (max)
Hat ornament	1915,12-16.130	Bronze, gold; cast, gilded	South Germany	c.1550	Circular plaque of Minos enthroned deciding upon the greatest hero of classical antiquity: Scipio Africanus, Alexander the Great, or Hannibal, all of whom are seated at the feet of Minos.	Weight = 0.021kg; diameter = 4.26cm (max)



Hat ornament	1915,12-16.128	Bronze, gold; cast, gilded, pierced	Italy	16C	Circular plaquette with the figure of Marcus Curtius on horseback leaping into a gulf from which ensues smoke and flames. There are two pierced holes for attachment at the sides.	Weight = 0.012kg; diameter = 3.40cm (max)
Hat ornament	1915,12-16.132	Bronze, gold; gilded, pierced	Italy	16C	Circular plaquette with the figure of Marcus Curtius on horseback leaping into a gulf from which ensues smoke and flames. It has a strapwork border with a figure of a satyr to each side and a grotesque head to the base.	Weight = 0.031kg; diameter = 4.67cm (max)
Hat ornament	1915,12-16.134	Bronze, gold; cast, gilded, pierced	Italy	16C	Circular plaquette depicting the marble group of Laocoon and his two sons being overcome by serpents. It has a floral wreath border with eight pierced holes for attachment.	Weight = 0.023kg; diameter = 4.77cm (max)
Hat ornament	1915,12-16.131	Bronze, gold; cast, gilded	Italy	16C	Circular plaquette with Apollo in armour and a naked Daphne becoming a laurel. Pierced to the left; indented to the right.	Weight = 0.018kg; diameter = 3.60cm (max)
Hat ornament	1915,12-16.226	Bronze, gold; gilded, cast, pierced	Northern Italy	early 16C	Circular plaquette with St Matthew seated and writing in an open book upon his knees. Before him stands a figure of an angel. The badge has a wreath border with two pierced holes at the sides for attachment.	Weight = 0.018kg; diameter = 3.60cm (max)
Hat ornament	1915,12-16.125	Bronze, gold; gilded, pierced, cast	Italy	16C	Circular plaquette possibly showing the Rape of Lucretia. The badge has a wreathed border and there are two holes at the sides for attachment.	Weight = 0.017kg; diameter = 3.77cm
Hat ornament	1915,12-16.133	Bronze, gold, enamel; gilded, enamelled	probably Italy	16C	Circular plaquette showing a scene from Pyramus and Thisbe. There are strong traces of enamel: green to the ground; and red and blue to the areas of relief and border, respectively. The border is a garlanded ring.	Weight = 0.023kg; diameter = 5.02cm (max)

Hat ornament	1928,10-15.1	Copper, painted enamel (silk, gold, stone, mother-of-pearl); enamelled, painted, pierced, gilded	France, possibly workshop of Couly Nouailher II; England (mount)	c.1560 ; 17C (mount)	Circular Limoges painted enamel badge with Jacob dressed as a Roman warrior and a man kneeling before him with hands raised in supplication. Inscribed top obverse 'SANCTE IACOBE'. The badge is pierced twice at the sides. Set in a square mount covered with red silk with gold thread, seed pearls and a red stone for decoration.	Weight = 0.097kg (of whole); diameter = 5.35cm (of roundel); length = 14.20cm (of whole)
Hat ornament (?)	1855,3-5.3	Copper, enamel; painted, enamelled	Limoges, France	c.1555	Circular plaque, possibly used as a hat ornament, showing the Resurrection of Christ. It bears the stamp of Jean Pénicaud II. Four holes at the edges suggest it was to be affixed to clothing or a hat.	Weight = 0.029kg; diameter = 7.74cm
Hat ornament (?)	1855,12-1.20	Copper, enamel, gold; painted, gilded, enamelled	Limoges, France	c.1540	Circular roundel set within a metal frame showing a scene of a cavalry skirmish and painted <i>en grisaille</i> with gilded highlights. It may have been worn as a hat ornament. Possibly made by Jean Pénicaud II.	Weight = 0.011kg; diameter = 3.71cm (max)
Hat ornament (?)	1890,6-22.6	Copper, enamel; painted, enamelled	Limoges, France	c.1580	Circular roundel showing a cavalry skirmish painted <i>en grisaille</i> with flesh tones. The reverse is enamelled with transparent green flux. It may have been worn as a hat ornament. Possibly made by Jean Pénicaud II.	Weight = 0.004kg; diameter = 3.00cm
Hat ornament (?)	1911,7-12.5	Copper, enamel, gold; painted, enamelled, gilded	Limoges, France	c.1560	Circular roundel set in a later gilt-metal frame with four loops for attachment. It shows a naked male standing with his left hand resting on a shield and in his right he holds some foliage. It is painted <i>en grisaille</i> . To the top is a gilded motto: 'TVRQ VIN SVIS'. Possibly worn as a hat ornament. Possibly made by Martin Didier.	Weight = 0.026kg; diameter = 5.40 (frame not included)
Hat ornament (?)	1913,12-20.14	Copper, enamel, gold; painted,	Limoges, France	c.1540	Circular roundel set in a modern gilded frame showing a portrait bust of a woman in sixteenth-century dress, <i>en grisaille</i> with flesh tones and details gilded.	Diameter = 6.20cm (frame not included)

		enamelled, gilded				
Hat ornament	2001,7-3.1	Silver, gold; gilded, cast, applied, soldered	England	16C	Cap-hook or hat ornament in the form of a six-spoked Catherine-wheel. The rim is gilded. The centre is set with a hemispherical boss from which radiates petal-like decoration.	Weight = 0.004kg; diameter = 0.192cm (max)
Hat ornament	2001,7-1.1	Silver, gold; gilded, engraved, soldered, cast	England	1500-1550	Gilded badge in the form of a recessed roundel engraved with a crowned 'I' between two Tudor roses on a hatched ground. The reverse is soldered with a flat section of a recurving pin (now broken).	Weight = 0.011kg; diameter = 2.50cm; depth = 0.55cm
Hat ornament	2001,3-10.1	Silver, gold, glass; gilded, pierced, soldered, hollow-cast, applied	England	mid 16C	Gilded hat ornament in the form of a dome with a circular back-plate with serrated edges. The dome section is pierced and applied with filigree ornament. The middle is set with a glass cameo of Jupiter Ammon, likely to be post-classical. At the reverse is soldered a recurving pin (now broken).	Weight = 0.004kg; diameter = 1.78cm
Hat ornament	2005,1-5.1	Silver; cast, soldered	England	16C	Cap-hook formed of a rectangular plate with two figures flanking Christ on the cross. A recurving hook is soldered to the reverse.	Weight = 0.002kg; width = 1.33cm; height = 1.00cm
Hat ornament	2006,3-1.1	Silver, gold; gilded, cast, soldered	England	16C	Gilded rectangular cap-hook with the obverse in the form of a stylised flower. A pyramidal form is at the centre. To the reverse is soldered an S-shaped pin.	Weight = 0.004kg; width = 1.40cm (max)
Ring (posy)	1856,7-1.2706	Gold; engraved	England	16/17 C	Flat hoop inscribed to the interior '+YOVRSTIL+DETH' and the exterior bears relief decoration of a band of circles containing quatrefoils, which alternate with semi-circles and dots.	Weight = 0.002kg; diameter = 1.83cm

						(max); height = 0.52cm
Ring (posy)	1942,7-8.1	Gold; engraved	England	late 16C	Wide flat hoop with eight wreathed bosses to the outer face, each surrounded by four pellets and inscribed to the inner surface 'Lat verteu be thy gyd'.	
Ring (posy)	1956,10-14.1	Gold, enamel; engraved, enamelled	England	16C	Wide hoop decorated to the outer face with bosses, within some are remains of turquoise and possibly white enamel. The inner surface bears a black enamelled capital letter inscription over two lines: '*TO*YOV*ABOVEN*ANI*CREATVRE/MY*HARTE*TO*THE*DE THE*SHAL*ENDVRE'.	Weight = 0.008kg; diameter = 2.09cm; height = 0.65cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.27	Gold; engraved	possibly Bristol, England	1580-1665	Hoop of d-shaped section inscribed to the inner surface 'I doe reioice in thee my choyce' and punched with a maker's mark 'WH' in Roman capitals in a heart-shaped punch, possibly that of William Harsell of Bristol. The family was active between 1580 and 1665.	Diameter = 2.35cm; width = 0.40cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.28	Gold; engraved	England	17/18 C	Hoop of d-shaped section inscribed to the inner surface in italics 'I lick I loue I liue content/I made my chois not to repent'. A marriage trigram of 'L' over 'R A' and a maker's mark of a Roman capital 'P' in a triangular punch are present.	Diameter = 2.10cm; width = 0.40cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.29	Gold; engraved	England	16/17 C	Hoop of d-shaped section inscribed to the inner face 'I like my choise'.	Diameter = 1.90cm; width = 0.50cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.33	Gold; engraved	England	16/17 C	Hoop of d-shaped section inscribed to the inner surface in italics 'I like my choyes to well to chainge'.	Diameter = 2.15cm; width = 0.35cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.37	Copper alloy; engraved	England	16/17 C	Hoop inscribed to the inner face in Roman capitals 'I LYKE MY CHO'.	Diameter = 2.20cm; width = 0.35cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.38	Gold, enamel; engraved; enamelled	England	16/17 C	Hoop of d-shaped section inscribed inside with Roman capitals 'x*I LYKE + MY + CHOYS*', with traces of black enamel within the lettering.	Diameter = 2.00cm; width = 0.50cm

Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.40	Gold; engraved	Lewes, England	1580 or 1650	Hoop of d-shaped section engraved to the inside in italics 'I reioyce in thee my choyce' and stamped with a maker's mark of initials 'WD' in Roman capitals within a tri-lobed heart-shape punch conjoined with three pellets above and one pellet below. Possibly the mark of either William Dobson senior (fl.1580) or junior (fl.1650).	Diameter = 2.00cm; width = 0.55cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.51	Gold, enamel; engraved, chased, enamelled	England	16/17 C	Hoop decorated externally with alternating chevrons of green and white enamel and inscribed to the inner face 'NEVER TO CHANG'.	Diameter = 1.70cm; width = 0.35cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.57	Silver; engraved	England	16/17 C	Plain hoop with an inscription to the inner surface 'Theire is none to me like Christ and thee'.	Diameter = 2.25cm; width = 0.45cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.65	Gold; engraved	England	16/17 C	Hoop of d-shaped section inscribed to the inside 'x CONTINEW x CONSTANT x'.	Diameter = 2.20cm; width = 0.50cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.82	Gold; engraved	Salisbury, England	1595-1633	Hoop of d-shaped section plain to the outer face and inscribed inside in italics 'Mutuall consent gives true content' and with a maker's mark of initials 'RT' in Roman capitals within a circular punch, identified as Robert Tyte of Salisbury active between 1595 and 1633.	Diameter = 2.10cm; width = 0.45cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.87	Copper alloy; engraved	England	16/17 C	Hoop of d-shaped section inscribed to the inside in italics 'No riches to Content'.	Diameter = 2.10cm; width = 0.35cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.93	Gold; engraved	Salisbury, England	1595-1633	Hoop of d-shaped section inscribed to the inner face in italics over two lines 'As love hath joyn'd our harts together/So none but death our harts shall sever' and stamped with the maker's mark for Robert Tyte of Salisbury (fl.1595-1633) – Roman capitals 'RT' within a circular punch.	Diameter = 2.20cm; width = 0.55cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.98	Silver; engraved	England	16/17 C	Hoop of d-shaped section inscribed inside 'Death Parts United Hearts'.	Diameter = 2.30cm; width = 0.45cm
Ring	1961,12-	Gold;	Lewes,	1580	Hoop of d-shaped section inscribed to the inner face in italics 'Yours	Diameter =

(posy)	2.114	engraved	England	or 1650	louinge Frend Till deth us end' and a maker's mark of the Roman capitals 'WD' within a tri-lobed heart-shaped punch conjoined with three pellets above and one below for either William Dobson senior (from 1580) or William Dobson junior (from 1650).	2.25cm; width = 0.45cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.124	Gold; engraved	England	16/17 C	Small hoop with inscription to inner surface in Roman capitals '-A-FRENDs+GYFTE'.	Diameter = 1.50cm; width = 0.30cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.148	Gold alloy; engraved	England	15/16 C	Broad hoop with incised decoration forming double raised borders and inscribed to the outer surface 'FERE GOD ONLI'. Originally accessioned as a serjeant's ring.	Weight = 0.003kg; diameter = 2.10cm; width = 0.70cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.149	Gold, enamel; engraved, enamelled	England	16/17 C	Hoop of d-shaped section inscribed to the inner surface in Roman capitals '*GEVE*GOD*THE*PRAYSE'. Traces of black enamel survive within the lettering.	Diameter = 2.00cm; width = 0.50cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.189	Gold; engraved	England	16C	Hoop with inscription to the inner face 'In*god*is*my*trost***III'.	Diameter = 2.00cm; width = 0.35cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.190	Gold; engraved	England	16C	Hoop inscribed to the inner surface '+IN.GOD.IS.MY.TRVST.ONLY'.	Diameter = 2.15cm; width = 0.45cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.196	Gold, enamel; engraved; enamelled	England	16/17 C	Hoop of d-shaped section decorated to the outer surface with incised bands and worn foliate motifs, within which are traces of enamel. It is inscribed on the inside face in Roman capitals over two lines '+THEM.WHICH.GOD.COPLETH.LET/.NO.MAN.PVT.THEN.ASONDAR'.	Weight = 0.009kg; diameter = 2.23cm; width = 0.55cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.359	Gold; engraved	England	16/17 C	Hoop with plain raised borders and inscribed to the inside face in Roman capitals 'PRAYES VERTU +'.	Diameter = 2.15cm; width =

						0.45cm
Ring (posy)	1961,12-2.460	Gold; engraved	England	late 16C/ early 17C	Hoop of d-shaped section inscribed to the inner surface in Roman capitals 'AMOR VINSIT OMNIAE'.	Diameter = 2.05cm; width = 0.45cm
Ring (posy)	2002,5-1.1	Gold, enamel; engraved, enamelled, chased	England	16/17 C	Hoop of d-shaped section decorated to the exterior with geometric patterns within which are traces of white enamel. The inside bears an inscription in Roman capitals '+PRENES+EN+GRE' (Accept this willingly) and an engraved flower which has traces of black enamel within it.	Diameter = 1.99cm; width = 0.39cm
Ring (posy)	AF.1188	Gold; engraved	England	16/17 C	Hoop of d-shaped section inscribed to the inside in Roman capitals '*A*FRIND*TO*THE*END'.	Diameter = 2.29cm
Ring (posy)	AF.1206	Gold; engraved	England	16C-18C	Hoop of d-shaped section inscribed to the inside 'AskE+AnD+HAUE'.	Diameter = 1.78cm
Ring (posy)	AF.1211	Gold, enamel; engraved; enamelled	England	16/17 C	Hoop of d-shaped section with traces of enamelling within the inscription 'BE TREU.IN.HART'.	Diameter = 1.83cm
Ring (posy)	AF.1216	Gold, enamel; engraved, enamelled	England	16/17 C	Three hoops within inscriptions on the outer faces of the two plain inner hoops. The single outer hoop is inscribed on the inside and has a geometric pattern to the exterior with traces of white and green enamel. The inscriptions are: BY TREVTH YE SHALL TRYE ME; BY TYME YE SHALL SPYE ME; SO FYND SO SET BY ME'	Diameter = 2.39cm
Ring (posy)	AF.1218	Gold, enamel; engraved, enamelled	England	16/17 C	Hoop with engraved decoration on the outer surface of a heart pierced by arrows, an anchor, a true lover's knot, and other devices which have traces of enamel. The inner face is inscribed 'Conceau consent confirme content' and this was originally enamelled.	Diameter = 1.83cm
Ring (posy)	AF.1228	Gold, enamel; engraved; enamelled	England	16/17 C	Hoop with the outer surface keyed, suggesting it was once enamelled. The inside bears the inscription 'x ERAM x NON x SVM' (I was but am not), which at one time was enamelled. The inscription could indicate use as a mourning ring.	Diameter = 1.85cm
Ring (posy)	AF.1337	Gold, enamel; enamelled, engraved	England	16C	Hoop with chequered decoration to the exterior which was at one time enamelled and the inner face bears the inscription '*LOVE*IS*A*IOY*'	Weight = 0.002kg; diameter = 1.89cm;

						width = 0.33cm
Ring (posy)	AF.1349	Gold; milled, engraved	England	16C- 18C	Hoop of d-shaped section, the exterior of which is milled and the inner face inscribed in italics 'No cut to unkindnes'.	Diameter = 2.08cm
Ring (posy)	AF.1383	Silver, gold; gilded, engraved	England	16/17 C	Broad flat hoop with inscribed on the outer face between two bands of line decoration '+THINKE x ON x ME' and with a maker's mark on the inner surface with the Roman capital letters 'RR' within a rectangular punch, the letters conjoined and the first being reversed.	Diameter = 2.01cm
Ring (posy)	AF.1397	Gold; engraved	England	16C- 18C	Hoop decorated with twisted and plain gold wires which form a figure-of-eight knot bezel and inscribed to the inside face 'Vertue.Rule.affection'.	Diameter = 1.93cm
Ring (posy)	AF.1406	Gold; engraved	England	16/17 C	Hoop of d-shaped section inscribed inside 'YELD+TO+RESON+T*A*'.	Diameter = 2.08cm
Ring (serjeant)	1856,6- 27.152	Gold; engraved	England	15C	Narrow flat hoop inscribed to the outer face in black letter 'vivat rex et lex', punctuated with cinquefoils and a star.	Diameter = 1.68cm
Ring (serjeant)	AF.1747	Gold; engraved	London, England	1577	Narrow flat band with raised borders and inscribed to the outer face in Roman capitals '*LEX + REGIS + PRAESIDIVM'. Made by Richard Pindar.	Weight = 0.007kg; diameter = 2.15cm; width = 0.86cm
Ring (serjeant)	1935,3- 6.1	Gold; engraved	London, England	1861	Wide flat band with inscription to the outer face in lower case italics 'Aliud nobis est agendum' and stamped also with hallmarks on the exterior. On the inner face stamped with the maker's mark of Roman capitals 'TB' in a rectangular punch with a pellet between the letters, for Thomas Bartlett of Clerkenwell.	Weight = 0.003kg; diameter = 1.75cm; width = 0.80cm
Ring (serjeant)	1973,7- 3.1	Gold; engraved	England	early 16C	Flat hoop with inscription to the outer face 'REX LEGE REGIT', with the words punctuated by flowers.	Diameter = 2.20cm; width = 0.60cm
Ring (serjeant)	AF.1750	Gold; engraved	London, England	1864	Flat broad hoop with raised borders stamped with hallmarks and the maker's mark for Thomas Bartlett on the exterior, also inscribed to the outer surface 'Leges sine Moribus Vanae'.	Weight = 0.005kg; diameter = 2.10cm;



						width = 1.20cm
Ring (serjeant)	AF.1748	Gold; engraved	London, England	1786- 1787	Flat hop with borders and inscribed to the outer face 'Reverentia Legum', also stamped with a maker's mark of 'RD' within an elliptical punch with a pellet between the letters, possibly for Richard Dipple. Hallmarked on the exterior with sovereign's head and lion passant.	Weight = 0.003kg; diameter = 2.05cm (max); width = 0.77cm
Ring (serjeant)	1910,5- 14.1	Gold; engraved	London, England	1768- 1772	Flat hoop with raised border and inscribed to the outer face 'Tu pace juvare Mortales', also stamped with the maker's mark of 'EP' in Roman capitals in a double lobed punch, possibly for Edmund Price.	Weight = 0.003kg; diameter = 2.14cm; width = 0.78cm
Ring (serjeant)	1879,8- 20.1	Gold, enamel; engraved, enamelled	London, England	1521	Narrow flat hoop with engraved borders and inscribed to the outer surface 'LEGIS+EXECVO*REGIG+PSERVA' with traces of enamel within it. Probably made by Oliver Dawes.	Diameter = 2.24cm
Ring (serjeant)	AF.1745	Gold; engraved	England	16C	Narrow flat hoop with engraved borders with cinquefoils and stars punctuating the words of the inscription 'VIVAT RE ET LEX' on the outer face. The leter 'C' is scratched on the inside of the hoop.	Diameter = 2.13cm
Ring (serjeant)	SLRings. 67	Gold; engraved	London, England	1724	Broad flat hoop with raised borders and inscribed to the outer face 'Bonus Foelixque tuis' and also stamped with a maker's mark 'WC' within a punch of two conjoined circles with a pellet between the lettering, possibly for William Coles.	Weight = 0.003kg; diameter = 2.01cm; width = 0.79cm
Ring (serjeant)	1905.6- 12.1	Gold; engraved	London, England	1828	Broad flat hoop with borders of raised bands inscribed to the outer face 'Justitiae tenax', also with maker's mark of 'WP' in Roman capitals within an elliptical punch probably that of William Archer Price. Hallmarked to the exterior with the sovereign's head, lion passant, and date letter 'n'.	Weight = 0.007kg; diameter = 2.00cm; width = 1.24cm
Ring (serjeant)	1910,5.14 .2	Gold; engraved	London, England	1774	Flat hoop with raised borders and inscribed to the outer face 'Imperio regit unus aequo' and a maker's mark, probably that of Edmund Price.	Weight = 0.003kg;

						diameter = 2.11cm; width = 0.78cm
Ring (serjeant)	AF.1746	Gold; engraved	London, England	1521	Narrow flat hoop with engraved borders and inscribed to the outer surface '+EXECVCO REGIS PSERVACIO LEGIS'. Probably made by Oliver Dawes.	Diameter = 2.13cm
Ring (serjeant)	AF.1749	Gold; engraved	London, England	1842	Narrow flat hoop with raised borders and inscribed to the outer surface 'Paribus legibus' and stamped also with a maker's mark of 'JL' in Roman capitals in an outline punch with a pellet between the letters for John Linnit. Hallmarked to the exterior with a sovereign's head, lion passant, date letter 'G', and leopard's head.	Weight = 0.003kg; diameter = 2.06cm; width = 0.59cm
Ring (serjeant)	1910,5- 14.4	Gold; engraved	London, England	1772	Flat hoop with raised borders inscribed on the exterior 'Mos et lex' and stamped with a maker's mark, probably that of Edmund Price.	Weight = 0.003kg; diameter = 2.04cm; width = 0.79cm
Ring (serjeant)	1910,5- 14.3	Gold; engraved	London, England	1768	Flat hoop with raised borders and inscribed on the outer surface 'Genitum se credere Mundo' and stamped with a maker's mark, probably that of Edmund Price.	Weight = 0.003kg; diameter = 2.02cm; width = 0.80cm
Ring (serjeant)	1961,12- 2.16	Gold; engraved	London, England	1848	Broad flat hoop with raised borders and inscription to the outer face 'Tout temps prist' and stamped with a maker's mark for John Linnit. Hallmarked to the exterior with sovereign's head, date letter, crown, '22', and leopard's head.	Diameter = 1.70cm; width = 0.80cm
Ring (serjeant)	1961,12- 2.11	Gold; engraved	London, England	1788	Broad flat hoop with double raised borders with inscription to outer face 'Quid leges sine moribus?' and stamped with maker's mark of 'WH' in Roman capitals within an elliptical punch for William Hopkins. Hallmarked to the exterior with the sovereign's head and lion passant.	Diameter = 1.95cm; width = 0.80cm
Ring (signet)	1871,3- 2.5	Gold, enamel;	England	16C	Plain hoop with chased scrollwork and arabesque ornament on the shoulders terminating in a flay hexagonal bezel with incurved sides and	Weight = 0.019kg;

		engraved, enamelled, chased			inset with a swivel oval plate, on which is engraved on one side with an enamelled white skull and on the other a merchant's mark and initials 'RE'. The bezel is inscribed around the oval plate '+MORS BONIS*GRATA' (Death is pleasing to the good).	diameter = 2.73cm (max)
Ring (signet)	1904,4- 20.3	Bronze; engraved		16C	Flat hoop terminating in an octagonal bezel engraved with a merchant's mark and letters 'G i f o'.	
Ring (signet)	1906,12- 19.2	Bronze, gold; gilded, engraved	England	16C	Broad hoop decorated on the shoulders with lozenges enclosing roses and leaves terminating in an oval bezel engraved with a crozier and the monogram 'IB b' within a pearled border. The reverse of the bezel is inscribed 'nul et ben'.	Diameter = 3.20cm
Ring (signet)	1927,2- 16.55	Gold; engraved	England	1553	Hoop of d-shaped section with an oval bezel engraved with a shield depicting the arms of Danby quartering Elvet and enclosed within a cabled border. Inscribed to the reverse of the bezel '1553/IS/P:Maye'. The letters 'IS' are entwined.	Length = 2.18cm (of bezel)
Ring (signet)	1927,2- 16.56	Gold; engraved	England	c.1577	Hoop terminating in an oval bezel engraved with a shield containing a pelican and three fleur-de-lys (the arms of Kempton of Cambridge and London) enclosed within a cabled border.	Length = 1.65cm (of bezel)
Ring (signet)	1927,2- 16.57	Gold, crystal, enamel; painted, engraved	England	1528- 1611	Hoop of d-shaped section terminating in an oval bezel set with crystal and engraved with a shield for the arms of Wilbraham. Behind the crystal the colours of the arms are painted in enamel. The reverse of the bezel is engraved 'Cominus RW quo minus'. The initials are separated by a figure-of-eight motif.	Weight = 0.017kg; diameter = 2.83cm (max)
Ring (signet)	1928,5- 7.1	Gold; engraved	England	early 17C	Hoop of d-shaped section terminating with a bezel engraved with a ship and the initials 'RH' in reverse above the sails of the ship. The reverse of the bezel is stamped with a maker's mark 'R' within a circular punch and above is the inscription 'A friends guifte'.	Length = 1.65cm (of bezel)
Ring (signet)	1959,2- 9.8	Silver; engraved			Hoop terminating in an oval bezel engraved with a female's head and the letters 'LS' in reverse.	Length = 1.78cm (of bezel)
Ring (signet)	1959,2- 9.19	Silver (?); engraved			Flat hoop with openwork shoulders terminating in an oval bezel engraved with a bird holding branches in its beak, with the letters 'ID' in reverse.	Length = 1.65cm (of bezel)
Ring (signet)	1982,7- 1.3	Gold, rock crystal, enamel;	England	1572- 1573	Hoop of d-shaped section with a large bezel set with rock crystal onto which the arms of Sir Thomas Smith are engraved. The colours of the arms are painted beneath the crystal.	Length = 2.50cm (max. of bezel)

		engraved, enamelled				
Ring (signet)	AF.636	Gold, rock crystal, enamel; engraved, enamelled	England	16C	Hoop of d-shaped section terminating in an oval bezel set with rock crystal engraved with the arms of Fleetwood, with the colours displayed in enamel beneath the crystal. The reverse of the bezel is engraved with a grasshopper, at one time enamelled.	Weight = 0.016kg; diameter = 2.72cm; length = 2.21cm (of bezel)
Ring (signet)	AF.718	Gold; engraved	England	16C	Hoop of d-shaped section with scroll and mask decoration to the shoulders and scroll ornament to the sides of the lozenge-shaped bezel, which is engraved with an ostrich holding a horseshoe in its beak and seated on a ducal coronet. Under this is the monogram 'HC' in reverse.	Weight = 0.028kg; diameter = 2.76cm (max)
Ring (signet)	AF.798	Gold; engraved	England	1500- 1550	Hoop of d-shaped section which widens at the shoulders to a flat oval bezel, which is engraved with 'TW' in reverse and joined by a tasselled knot and surmounted by two flowers. A very worn beaded border is just visible.	Weight = 0.018kg; diameter = 2.39cm (max)
Ring (signet)	AF.809	Gold; engraved	England	16C	Hoop of d-shaped section which widens at the shoulders to an oval bezel engraved with a seated greyhound upon a crest wreath and enclosed within a beaded border.	Weight = 0.044kg; diameter = 2.86cm (max)
Ring (signet)	AF.810	Gold; engraved	England	16C	Hoop of d-shaped section which widens at the shoulders to an oval bezel engraved with a shield bearing the arms of Sir John Tirrell, above which are the initials 'IT' in reverse.	Weight = 0.037kg; diameter = 3.05cm (max)
Ring (signet)	AF.814	Gold; engraved	England	late 16C	Hoop of d-shaped section which widens at the shoulders to an oval bezel engraved with a crowned warrior in armour by whose head are the initials 'TS' superimposed. The reverse of the bezel is stamped with a maker's mark 'M' in an angular shield. The hoop is inscribed inside 'Victorious he who beareth me:'.	Weight = 0.011kg; diameter = 2.01cm (max)
Ring	AF.818	Gold;	England	c.1600	Hoop that widens at the shoulder to an oval bezel engraved with a shield	Diameter =

(signet)		engraved			depicting the arms of Urswick and enclosed within a cabled border.	2.13cm
Ring (signet)	AF.824	Gold, enamel; engraved, enamelled	England	17C	Hoop of d-shaped section which widens at the shoulders to an oval bezel engraved with a pelican in her piety enclosed within a cabled border. The reverse of the bezel is stamped a maker's mark 'H' (a cursive capital) within a shield. Above this are engraved the letters 'TW' superimposed.	Weight = 0.008kg; diameter = 2.08cm (max)
Ring (signet)	AF.826	Gold; engraved	England	early 17C	Hoop of d-shaped section which widens at the shoulders to a flat oval bezel engraved with a quartered shield of arms and enclosed within a cabled border. The reverse of the bezel is stamped with a maker's mark 'IP' within a shaped shield.	Diameter = 2.54cm

The following is a record of the museum registration numbers for signet rings that were used as a sample from which to draw material used in the thesis. The search criterion on the British Museum's database was limited to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century examples from the department of Prehistory and Europe.

1914,5-13.3	1836,9-1.95	1865,4-8.35	1865,12-3.53	1872, 6-4.280	1890,9-1.107
AF.646	1836,9-1.101	1865,4-8.36	1865,12-3.54	1872, 6-4.376	1890,9-1.108
AF.650	1836,9-1.108	1865,4-8.41	1865,12-3.55	1872, 6-4.383	1893, 6-1.253
AF.751	1836,9-1.110	1865,4-8.42	1865,12-3.56	1872, 6-4.385	1893, 6-1.264
AF.759	1836,9-1.111	1865,4-8.43	1865,12-3.58	1872,6-4.386	1893,6-1.265
AF.834	1839,9-21.7	1865,4-8.44	1865,12-3.61	1872, 6-4.387	1893,6-1.266
AF.2480	1852,5-22.9	1865,4-8.46	1865,12-3.62	1872, 6-4.391	1893,6-1.459
1836,9-1.80	1853,2-18.12	1865,4-8.47	1865,12-3.63	1872, 6-4.392	1899,5-20.1
1836,9-1.85	1856,7-1.2721	1865,4-8.50	1865,12-3.64	1872, 6-4.396	1904,4-20.3
1836,9-1.90	1856,7-1.2722	1865,4-8.51	1866,5-4.54	1872, 6-4.969	1906,12-19.2
1836,9-1.94	1865,3-24.30	1865,12-3.50	1870,4-2.768	1872,6-4.970	1923,10-8.1

1927,2-16.55	AF.662	AF.688	AF.715	AF.743	AF.774
1927,2-16.56	AF.663	AF.689	AF.716	AF.744	AF.775
1927,2-16.58	AF.664	AF.690	AF.719	AF.745	AF.776
1927,2-16.59	AF.665	AF.691	AF.720	AF.747	AF.777
1927,2-16.67	AF.666	AF.693	AF.721	AF.748	AF.778
1928,3-10.1	AF.667	AF.694	AF.722	AF.749	AF.779
1928,5-7.1	AF.668	AF.695	AF.723	AF.750	AF.781
1935,7-10.1	AF.669	AF.696	AF.724	AF.753	AF.782
.371	AF.670	AF.699	AF.727	AF.754	AF.783
AF.645	AF.671	AF.700	AF.728	AF.755	AF.784
AF.647	AF.672	AF.701	AF.729	AF.756	AF.785
AF.648	AF.674	AF.702	AF.732	AF.757	AF.786
AF.651	AF.676	AF.703	AF.733	AF.758	AF.788
AF.652	AF.677	AF.704	AF.734	AF.760	AF.789
AF.653	AF.678	AF.705	AF.735	AF.761	AF.790
AF.654	AF.679	AF.706	AF.736	AF.762	AF.791
AF.655	AF.680	AF.707	AF.737	AF.766	AF.793
AF.656	AF.681	AF.709	AF.738	AF.767	AF.794
AF.658	AF.683	AF.710	AF.739	AF.768	AF.795
AF.659	AF.685	AF.711	AF.740	AF.769	AF.796
AF.660	AF.686	AF.712	AF.741	AF.772	AF.797
AF.661	AF.687	AF.713	AF.742	AF.773	AF.799

AF.800	AF.826	AF.859	1872,6-4.445	AF.640	AF.631
AF.801	AF.827	AF.860	AF.595	AF.641	AF.633
AF.802	AF.828	AF.861	AF.615	AF.642	AF.682
AF.803	AF.829	AF.863	AF.617	WB.198	SLRings.80
AF.804	AF.830	AF.864	AF.618	AF.637	
AF.805	AF.831	AF.865	AF.619	AF.643	
AF.806	AF.832	AF.866	AF.620	AF.792	
AF.807	AF.833	AF.942	AF.621	AF.841	
AF.808	AF.835	AF.975	AF.622	1927,2-16.57	
AF.811	AF.836	AF.977	AF.623	AF.628	
AF.812	AF.837	AF.982	AF.624	AF.714	
AF.813	AF.838	AF.1022	AF.625	AF.717	
AF.815	AF.839	OA.7454	AF.626	AF.718	
AF.816	AF.840	OA.7461	AF.627	AF.780	
AF.817	AF.842	OA.7463	AF.629	AF.798	
AF.818	AF.843	SLSeals.85	AF.630	AF.809	
AF.819	AF.844	SLSeals.88	AF.632	AF.810	
AF.820	AF.846	SLSeals.95	AF.634	AF.814	
AF.821	AF.850	SLSeals.121	AF.635	AF.824	
AF.822	AF.851	SLSeals.122	AF.636	1856,10-15.1	
AF.823	AF.852	1865,4-8.52	AF.638	1982,7-1.3	
AF.825	AF.855	1872,6-4.416	AF.639	1852,5-21.2	

## Appendix C

### Selections from the inventory of William Herbert

12 December 1561

f.1r: An Inuentorie of all the Gold and Sylver plate, Jewelles apparell and wardrobe stuffe, with the Furniture of Stable Armorie and all other implementes of householde belonging to the right honorable William Earle of Penbroke: vewed at the comaundement of the seyd Earle, by the L[ord] Harbert of Cardyf his sonne, John Hownde, William Jordan, John Dysteley Morgan Lloyd Servantes to the seyd Earle the xii of December Anno D[omi]ni 1561. Regni Elizabethe Regine quarto.

f.13r: Castinge Bottells.

A Castinge Bottell all gylte and Chased with Dyamond poyntes poiz – vij oz iij q[ua]rteres  
<geuen to the christning of morganes child by my Ladey>

<sup>1</sup>Sixe Casting Bottelles whereof ~~four~~ <fyue> being in the Jewell house in Morgane keping at this present inuentorie taking and two with my Ladie poiz – xlij oz

One Casting Bottell chased with Antiue worcke with a Satyr and a woman on the one syde poiz – vij oz q[ua]rter

A casting bottell of a Sheld wrought like an aget garnished w[i]th Siluer and gilt geuen by m[aste]r Starley of the mynt

f.31r: An Inventory taken the Last Dayes of January and in the fourthe yere of the raigne of o[u]r Soueraigne Ladie Elizabethe of al suche iewelless as were then in my Ladies Custodie Gyrdelles.

First a girdell of golde sett with pearle conteignninge lvij knottes beinge Lincked together, one knott with an pearle and the other with counterfect saphires and Rubies hauinge a knappe at thende accordingly and one of the peces broken poiz x unces q[ua]rter farthinge golde weight

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<sup>1</sup> LH marginalia: one of these Six geuen to the christening of mistress Rachell Hopthones child by my La[die] poiz xi oz q[ua]rter.



A girdell of golde sett with pearle cont[eyning] lxxvj peces with a knappe to hange at the ende sett with pearle and Litell Chaynes hanginge at it poiz xj vnces iij q[uar]ters di[mi] farthinge golde weight

A girdell of golde enameled with blacke white and grene conteyninge x knottes and lxxxvj Linckes and a knobbe hanginge at the ende poiz x vnces iij q[uar]teres

An other girdell of golde conteyninge x knottes enameled with blewe grene white and redd conteyninge ciiii Linckes an hooke and a knobbe at the ende enameled grene white and redd poiz xi vnces iii q[uar]teres

An other girdell of golde enameled wit[h] blacke and white cont[eyninge] cxvj grete Linckes with a claspe. xj grete pillars and a knoppe likewise enameled poiz xvj vnces q[uar]ter

<sup>2</sup>An other girdell of golde white enameled cont[eyninge] cxxix Linckes a claspe xxj knottes and a knobbe at theinde and Litell chaynes at it poiz xxiiij vnces iij q[uar]teres one farthinge golde.

<sup>3</sup>An other girdell of golde enameled with black cont[eyninge] xcic Linckes xxv knottes and a knobbe white and blacke enameled at it the chaynes beinge changed.

f.31v: <sup>4</sup>A fore p[ar]te of a girdell with xxiiij<sup>ti</sup> Diamundes and cc pearles & apott at thende w[i]th xxiiij p[ear]les & vij Dyamondes

f.32v: Collers and gargenettes.

A Coller of golde sett w[i]th Diamondes and pearleviz x Diamondes and x pearle cont[eyninge] x peces

A Gargnet of golde cont[eyninge] xvi peces enameled w[i]th blacke white and blewe and havinge xvj pearle hanginge at it.

<sup>5</sup>A Sabelles heade with xxti Diamondes and a ringe with a rubie in his mouthe and with x sparckes of Diamondes with iiij clawes of golde and Diamondes therein and a Chaine hanginge at it

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<sup>2</sup> LH marginalia: *note* that the knobbes & litel chaynes do lock & iiij lynkes.

<sup>3</sup> LH marginalia: *note* that the knobbes, knott & iiij linkes.

<sup>4</sup> LH marginalia: *note* that he is but xiiij dyamondes & Dyreck had the {xx}st to make my Lordes chaynes.

<sup>5</sup> LH marginalia: my Lord at the Court.

f.33r: Bracelettes.

A paire of bracelettes of golde beinge enameled with white, blewe and redd havinge one Diamond in every one of them

A paire of bracelettes sett with viij Diamondes viij Rubies and xxxij*ti* pearle.

A paire of bracelettes of flaggon facion w[i]th hoopes

A paire of bracelettes sett with xxiiij*ti* pearles ij Diamondes ij Turkasyes ij rubies ij Emerawdes ij Saphires one Topias and one Amathiste.

f.33v: Chaynes exchanged.

A Chaîne of golde havinge x knobbes blacke enamelede and with plaine Linckes.

A Chaîne of muske w[i]th lxxiiij peces of golde

A Chaîne of golde given to my Ladie by my Lorde Robert.

A Chaîne with xviiij Diamondes & xviiij small Rubies.

A Chaîne blacke and white enamelede w[i]th pillars and Litell pearle.

f.34r: A paire of beades of redde Currall cont[eyninge] xlti stones of Currall tenne gaudies of golde and xl Litell beades of golde to goe betwene.

A paire of beades of white Currall cont[eyninge] xxxiiij beades viij gaudies of golde and xlti Longe peces of golde betwixte the beades

A paire of beade of small garnettes conteyning betwene the beades lviiij*ti* small peces of golde and viij gaudies of golde enamelede with redde and white

A paire of Litell garnettes with ix gaudies and lviiij golde beades betwene.

A paire of beades of greate Agate cont[eyninge] xxiiij Agates sett with pearles xxiiij*ti* gaudies of golde with with a tassell of pearle.

A paire of beades of tennes of Lapis Lazulares cont[eyninge] x stones sett in golde xxiiij*ti* garnettes and xjji peces of golde.

f.34v: Tablettes.

A greate Tablett of golde beinge all blacke enameled on the backside and one the other side blacke and white w[i]th an aguet.

An other tablett with a scripture on the backside and in the fore p[ar]te a mullett and x Diamondes with iij Rubies and iij other Diamondes on the sides.

<sup>6</sup>A Tablett cont[eyning] viij Rubies on the one side and a greate Emeraude on the other side with a cluster of pearles hanginge at it conteynge iiij peare facion pearle

A Tablett of kinge Phillippes face on the one side and his fathers Charles Themperores on thother side.

<sup>7</sup>A Tablett w[i]th ix greate Diamondes on the one side and a P on thother side with viij Diamondes and a greate platted Chaîne with it.

A unicornes bone sett in golde with one Turkois twoo Rubies and iij Diamondes.

A booke of golde with ij Saphires and viij Rubies sett in it.

A booke of gold with an knotte enameled blacke and white of Gilbertes workinge.

A booke of golde w[i]th iiij Saphires havinge in it the History of David daunsinge before the arke.

f.35r: Flowers at the Court.

A flower with a greate Emerawde and a greate Dyamonde with a pearle at it beinge enameled blewe, white, and redd.

An Amethiste sett in golde.

A Topias sett in golde with a pearle at it

<sup>8</sup>A flower with iij table rubies and one rocke ruby with iij faire pearles hanginge at it

A flower of golde enameled with blacke cont[eyning] in it ij pointed and vi table Diamondes with a greate pearle poiz one vnce di[mi] q[uar]ter farthinge gold weight

A flower of golde with v Diamondes poiz iij q[uar]ter di[mi] farthinge golde w[eigh]te

<sup>9</sup>A flower of golde w[i]th v roses of Diamondes w[i]th a pearle poi zed nces di[mi] q[uar]t[er] farthing golde weight

f.35v: Flowers

A flower enameled with white sett w[i]th an Emerawde a Rubye and pearle pendant poiz di[mi] vnce farthinge golde weight.

<sup>10</sup>A flower of golde with ij greate table Diamondes and one greate pointed Diamonde enameled w[i]th blewe white and redde with a peare facion pearle at it pendant

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<sup>6</sup> LH marginalia: The pearles be Lost.

<sup>7</sup> LH marginalia: at the Court.

<sup>8</sup> LH marginalia: at the court.

<sup>9</sup> LH marginalia: These Diamondes are in my Lordes collar of Diamondes.

<sup>10</sup> LH marginalia: at the Court.

A flower of golde with a ruby and an emeraude with Antiques at the toppe white enameled  
& a pearle hanginge at it

<sup>11</sup>A greate ballise with a pearle pendant sett with Snakes grene enameled

A Crosse of golde sett with vi table Diamondes and iiij Triangle Diamondes and iij pearles  
pendant.

f.36r: Brooches.

A brooche of golde enameled with black and blewe with a balleise in it poiz ij vnces and  
farthinge golde weight.

f.36v: Buttons.

Spanyshe Buttones of golde beinge enameled blacke and blewe and white viij dosen paires.

Buttons with iij pearles in a pece viij dosen paires.

Buttons of golde white and blewe enameled w[i]th Cupides bowew viij dosen paires.

Buttons of golde enameled blacke v dosen paire and ij buttones.

Buttons enameled white and blacke v dosen di[mi]

f.37r: Agglettes.

Agglettes of golde enameled blacke and white vij dosen paire.

Agglettes with pearles enameled white vj dosen paires.

Greate Agglettes blacke enameled lxiiij.

f.38r: An Inventory of all suche apparell Furies and Jewelles as be in the chardge of Thomas  
Gregory the xvij of August anno d[omi]ni, 1561.

Item a Longe gowne of blacke satten with Longe sleeves garded with blacke veluett with ij  
weltes of veluett on both the sides of the garde Laide betwene vpon the garde with blacke  
satten and Lace of blacke silke with xliij buttons of golde and iij pearles on every button  
furred throughout w[i]th sables.

Item a Longe gowne of blacke Damaske w[i]th a garde of veluett and a welte of veluett on  
either side of the garde Laide vpon with a pomell Lace of silke purled on thone side sett  
with viij greate buttons of golde with iij pearles in every button blacke grene and blewe  
enameled furred with sables.

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<sup>11</sup> LH marginalia: at the Court.

f.59r: Hattes.

Item a ~~Cappe~~ <hatt> of black ~~veluet~~ <felt> trymmed aboute the edge with a p[ar]cement Lace of golde the bande of black veluett covered nettwise havinge a white agat faced like Hercules with iij Diamondes vppon the same enameled grene and blewe

Item a hatt of black taffata stitched all overwith silver with a plate bande and buckle of silver having an agat of a womans face enameled rounde aboute with white and grene and a plume of silke with a herries toppe trymmed with silver.

Item a blewe thrimmed hatte edged about w[i]th a cheine Lace of blewe silke and silver the bande trymmed with silver havinge an agat called Lapis Lazulus faire sett enamled blacke and blewe with a plume of purple silke trymed w[i]th golde.

Item a thrimmed hatte edge aboute w[i]th silver cheine Lace with a bande of crimsen silke and silver havinge an agett of a womans face with a snake runnyng downe her necke sett with iij emeraldes enameled white and a plume of crymsen silke trymed with golde

Item a blacke thromed hatte edged w[i]th a cheine Lace of black seilke and siluer with a bande of black silke and siluer havinge a faire brooche w[i]th a face like a women redde enclosed in golde enameled black w[i]th a plume of black silke trymed w[i]th golde.

f.61v: Cappes.

A cappe of black veluett w[i]th a faire bande of golde of billiment worke havinge an agett of a Deathes heed enameled white and black the bande cont[eyninge] xxix*ti* peces doble.

Item a cappe of black veuett with a bande of golde havinge xix golde buttons white and blewe enameled and a faire perle on every button.

Item a cappe of black veluett w[i]th a bnade of pomandre trymed with golde full of small perle and xxij*ti* small Agatt of sundrie pictures the bande beinge very swete and made cheine wise.

Item a cappe of black veluett w[i]th a bande of xvj golde buttones and a faire pearle on every button trymed w[i]th liij*ti* smaller buttones w[i]th iiij small perle on every button havinge a very faire brooche sett w[i]th xxiiij*ti* Diamondes and ix rubies enameled white, grene, and black.

Item a cappe of black veluett w[i]th a bande of xij longe buttones havinge ij pearles on every button and a ruby betwene the perles on every button, and also twoe very faire pearles thone sett w[i]thin a greate button, and thother in the foote of a Dragon all enameled redd, white and grene.

Item a cappe of black veluett with a bande of blacke silke.

f.62v: Cappes

Item a cappe of black veluett w[i]th an agath like an aungell sett with vj Diamondes redde & blewe enameled, the cappe also trymed w[i]th golde and xxxv*ti* golde buttones like snakes blewe enameled.

Item a cappe of black veluett w[i]th a faire brooche havinge a ~~faire~~ fier of rubies, and a table Diamonde sett w[i]th xxxij*ti* golde buttones w[i]th iiij perles on every button and xxix small buttons, white enameled w[i]th a fine bande of perle aboute the said cappe.

f.73r: Buttons and aglettes beinge on no garmentes.

vlviij*ti* buttons enameled blewe and redde w[i]th iiij perles on every button.

Item xxxvj*ti* buttons of golde black enameled

Item vj dosen buttons, white and blewe enameled fasshioned like the sonne.

Item iiij dosen and x buttons enameled white and black w[i]th iiij corners.

Item xliij buttons w[i]th iiij perles on every button beinge black enameled.

Item xxij paire of aglettes black enameled

Item lxviij buttons of golde

Item xxij buttons lesser like vnto the same.

Item iiij dosen iiij buttons enameled white called Pannses made by Denham.

Item v buttons white and black enameled

Item iiij buttons made like snailles enameled white

f.73v: Buttons.

Item ij dosen viij greate buttons bosselike w[i]th a faire perle on the toppe of every button enameled white black and blewe.

f.74v: Brooches Buttons and agattes beinge on neither cappes nor hattes.

Item a brooche w[i]th an agat havinge a mans face and a womans sett with iiij table Diamondes white, redde, russett, and black.

Item an Agatt of a woman morens hedde with a white Launde vppon the hedde sett with iiij Rubies and iiij Diamondes enameled white and black w[i]th one hundred and xvj buttons black enameled.

Item a brooches of blown worke of naked men with a rocke rubie in the foote and iiij table  
Diamondes w[i]th a hundred and xiiij buttons white and black enameled.

Item an agat of a morens hedde enameled white black russett and greene w[i]th Cxliiij  
buttons black enameled.

Item another Agat of a morens hedde enameled white, black, and grene, havinge iij Litle  
rubies iij Litle Diamondes w[i]th Cxx buttons black enameled

Item viij pictures of Dyvers Sortes inclosed with Leather and gilte.

f.75v: Georges Cheines garters and Coller.

Firste a faire cheine one Lincke in anither Doble w[i]th a faire George enameled white redde  
and grene black and blewe.

Item another cheine w[i]th a george beinge vpon enameled white, redde, blewe, and grene

Item another cheine w[i]th a faire george sett w[i]th x Diamondes enameled white blewe and  
grene.

Item a knitte cheine of golde w[i]th a george enameled white, blewe, redde, and grene.

Item another cheine of gold w[i]th a george and a clock in the same.

Item a george vppon a pied horse enameled black and grene sett with v Diamondes the cheine  
thereof given by my Lorde at the Christeninge of Hipolita the Tartarian.

Item a george vppon a white horse w[i]th ij ringes and ij buttons of ogld the george beinge  
enameled blewe redde and greene the cheine thereof delivered to my Ladie to hange her  
tablett at.

Item a faire Carkanett of xx*ti* buttons of golde whereof x w[i]th a faire Diamonde vpon every  
button and thother x ij perles on every button with a faire george sett with xvj Diamondes the  
horse beinge white and the Dragon all grene.

f.76r: Georges &c.

Item another Carkanett w[i]th xxiii*ti* buttons whereof xij like knottes and thother xij like  
roses w[i]th a garter aboute the xij roses enameled blewe, redde, and grene and george  
enameled white grene and blewe

Item a faire Coller w[i]th x*l**ti* faire peces of golde whereof xx*ti* like redde roses w[i]th garters  
aboute them enameled white blewe, redde, and grene, and thother xx*ti* beinge cleane golde  
w[i]thout ammell w[i]th a faire george sett w[i]th vij Diamondes enameled white and grene.

Item a Cronett of golde with the cappe to the same.

Item a garter of the ordre w[i]th buckle pendante xx*ti* l[ett]res and vj pescoddes of golde and on every L[ett]re iij small perles sett w[i]th x Diamondes enameled redde, and white

Item another garter w[i]th xx*ti* l[ett]res buckle pendaunte and vj studdes of golde, sett w[i]th x Diamondes enameled white, redde, and grene.

Item another garter w[i]th xx*ti* l[ett]res buckle pendaunte and vj stoddes of golde, white, redde, blewe, and grene, and a faire perle on the pendante.

Item another garter with xx*ti* L[ett]res buckell pendaunte and vj studdes of golde w[i]th a Diamonde on the pendante enameled white blewe and redde.

Item another garter w[i]th xx*ti* l[ett]res buckell pendant and vj stoddes of golde, enameled white, blewe, redde, and grene.

f.76v: Georges &c.

Item another garter w[i]th xx*ti* l[ett]res of perles imbrodered all over with perles and buckle pendante and iij studdies of golde enameled white, blewe, and redde.

f.77v: Cheines and other things delyvered to Thomas Gregorye by my ladie xij Febr[uary] 1561.

Item a Longe Cheine enameled white, blewe, and redde with a faire george belonginge to the same.

Item a girdell of siluer w[i]th buckelles and other furniture to the same of massie siluer.

Item a george enameled given my Ladie by my La[die] Marques.

Item a george enameled w[i]th cutte worke on thone side given my L[adie] by my La[die] Anne Wharton.

Item a george w[i]th kinge Phillippes face on thone side

Item a litle george

Item a paire of corall beades w[i]th the v woundes and a crosse of golde.

Item a paire of Tennes of agat and a faire crosse enameled w[i]th the v woundes, a greate ringe, and iij other peces of golde aboute the same, the agettes also garnished w[i]th golde.

Item a purs of Russett silke and siluer w[i]th a ringe of siluer enameled.

Item another purse of russett silke and siluer and golde w[i]th a damaskin ringe.

Item ij Skutchions of my L[ordships] armes thone bigger than thother.

f.78r: Del[i]ured by my Ladie

Item xxx*ti* compters of siluer of a straunge coine



Item xxxvj*ti* compters of siluer of the frenche coine of xviiiij*d.* the pece.

Item xxv*ti* other compters of siluer.

Item a litle purs of black veluett olde.

f.79r: Rynges deliuered by my lady to Tydio demoye the vj of Febr[ary] 1561.

Firste iij Deathes heddes enameled w[i]th black

Item ij other Deathes heddes enameled white and black.

Item one yelowe Topias

Item a ringe with a Diall and a white Topias in the toppe

Item ij Ringes of Astronome

Item a ringe with the Dragon graven

Item a faire ringe w[i]th a face graven of Lapis Lazulus.

Item a ringe w[i]th a stanche stone given my L[orship] by my L[ordship] of Beddes.

Item xij litle hopes enameled of Divers Colers

Item xv crampe ringes whereof v of golde and x of siluer.

f.79v: Rynges Cheines Buttones georgies and other thinges remayninge with Tidio Demoye the xji of Febr[uary] 1561.

A faire table Diamonde enameled white, blewe, and redde.

A ringe w[i]th a table Diamonde blewe and redde enameled.

Another table Diamonde enameled blacke white and redde.

Two table Diamondes enameled black, white, blewe and redde

A Litle Diamonde enameled white black & grene

A Table Diamonde sett w[i]th xiiij small rubies enameled white and black.

A pointed Diamonde sett w[i]th viij other Diamondes black and grene enameled

A ringe w[i]th an emeraude enameled white & redde

A ringe with a Turques black and redde enameled

A ringe w[i]th ix turquesses black enameled.

A ringe w[i]th a rubie enameled white, redde, blewe and grene.

f.80r: W[i]th Tidio

A ringe w[i]th a rubie enameled white and redde

A ringe with a faire rubie enameled white grene and blewe.

A ringe w[i]th a faire amyteste orientall enameled black white, and grene.

A ringe w[i]th a lile rubie enameled white & grene.

A ringe w[i]th a stone called a shepes eie enameled black and white.

A ringe w[i]th a faire cutte Diamonde

Another ringe w[i]th small table Diamonde

Another ringe w[i]th a small table Diamonde blewe enameled

A faire knyfe of golde w[i]th a glasse in thende of the hafte, sett w[i]th xxiti perles and iiij rubies enameled blewe, redde, and white with a sheethe of black veluett sett w[i]th xxvijti perles trymed w[i]th siluer

Another knyfe of golde w[i]th viij rubies on the hafte and vj small perles, blewe, white, and grene enameled w[i]th a sheathe of black veluett garnished w[i]th golde sett w[i]th iiij small rubies grene and white enameled w[i]th a lace of black silke and golde.

f.81r: Cheines, Georgies, Buttons, and other things deliuered to Thomas Gregory by Tidio the vij of Febr[uary] 1561.

A faire Cheine of Christalline and golde w[i]th a george vppon a white horse enameled white blewe redde and grene on thone side and a george of the mother of perle on thother side havinge lxxxx Christallynes.

A girdle of Christallyne and golde and beinge very faire at the einde trymed w[i]th golde, and Cix smaller Christallynes

A very faire and greate perle w[i]th a smaller perle garnished w[i]th golde blewe and redde enameled & w[i]th in it vj emerades in L[ett]res beinge this worde IHVS

Item a p[er]le trymed w[i]th golde to hange at ones eare

Item xxxti frenche compters of ix*d*. A pece gilte in a litle purse of blacke silke and siluer.

Fowre Dosen very faire buttons hollowe wrought iiij square white blewe and black enameled iiij Dosen buttons called Pannses white and blewe enameled

A faire cheine iiij pillar fasshion hollowe wrought w[i]th xij buttons sett all over w[i]th perle musked w[i]th a faire george on bothe sides enameled blewe, redde, white, and grene.

f.81v: with Thomas Gregory from Tidio.

A faire cheine w[i]th xxvj Camewes and xxvj p[er]les garnished very faire with golde blewe enameled w[i]th a faire george of an agat trymed w[i]th golde

A pece of the same of golde w[i]th vj Camewes and vj perles.

## Appendix D

### Extracts from the last will and testament of Robert Sackville, dated 11 August 1607

f.3v: And further I giue will and bequeathe vnto her<sup>1</sup> all suche Jewelles of gould pearle and precious stone as at any tyme heretofore have ben giuen vnto her either by my selfe or by any other or els boughte and provided by her selfe, and which ar[e] particularlie set downe and conteyned in an Inventory in wryting thereof made vnder this title folowinge viz: An Inventory in wryting conteyning the seuerall Sortes parcelles and valewes of all suche Jewelles of gould pearle and precious stone as at any tyme heretofore haue ben giuen to the Right honorable the Lady Cicelie Countesse of Dorsett either by the Right honorable Thomas Earle of Dorsett Lord heighe Treasurer of England her husbande or by any other or els boughte and prouided by her selfe made the {blank} Daye of June in the yere of oure Lorde god one thousand sixe hundred and seaven and in the yere of the raigne of oure most gracious Soueraigne Kynge James namely of England France and Ireland the fist and of Scotland the fortithe, beyng subscribed to euery page thereof with the hande and name of the saied Lorde Treasurer and whereof one parte remayne with his Lo[rds]hipp and the other parte with the saied Countesse his wife. This farre the title. All which sayed Jewells of gould pearle and precious so giuen vnto her or boughte and provided by her selfe and particularlie set downe and conteyned in this saied Inventarye in wrytinge bearing Date the {blank} Daye of June & as is aforesayed or so muche thereof as shall remayne at the tyme of my decease I do fullie and absolutelye giue will and bequeathe vnto my sayed most deerelie beloued wife. Also I do giue will and bequeathe vnto her out of those Jewelles of gould pearle and pretious stone which I keepe and reserue as Jewelles for my selfe and to myne owne priuat vse during my life these twoe Jewelles folowing that is to saye: One Rope of fayer round orient and greate pearle conteyning the nomber of one hundred and three score pearle having a Carnation Rybben silke lace sewed to eache end of the sayed Rope. And one other Jewell of gould made into the fashion of a Crosse or Crucifix beyng on the one syde sett with twelue greate Dyamondes, whereof one Diamond set in the Toppe is a faier greate Table Diamond And twoe other Diamonds set on the sydes ar[e] fayer greate Triangle Diamonds And one other

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<sup>1</sup> His wife, Cicely.

Diamond set ~~on~~ <in> the lower parte of the sayed Jewell is a very faire and great Triangle Dyamond. And sixe other Diamonds which make the Crosse in the myddest ar[e] faier greate Table Dyamonds one of them beyng muche longer than the other fyve. The other syde of the saied Jewell beyng faire enameled with diuers coloures: And which sayed Jewell hath three faire greate peare pearles pendant to the same. Both which saied Jewelles I do fullie f.4r: and absolutely giue will and bequeathe vnto my said most Deereleie beloued wife. More I do fullie and absolutly giue will and bequeathe vnto her all her Apparrell whatsoever together with all her wearing Lynnen and other necessaryes of all sortes, appertinent ~~and~~ <or> serving for the vse and ornament of her Bodye Cushion Cubbards, Cabonettes and Boxes whatsoever.

f.10r: Furthermore I giue will and bequeathe vnto my saied Sonne Buchurst, all and singular my Robes of all sortes whatsoever as well belonging to the most honorable Order of the Garter as to the highe state and Dignitie of an Earle together with all other ornamentes and pertinentes incident and belonging to them or either of them. Except neuerthesse all and euery my Chaines, Garters, and Georges of gould or sett with pearle or precious stone which I haue vsed to weare or might haue worne as Knyghte of the most noble order of the Garter. And I do likewise giue will & bequeathe vnto my saied sonne Buchurst all my Apparrell garmentes and wearinge Lynnen whatsoever beyng particularlie set downe and conteyned in one Inventory in wryting thereof made vnder this Title folowing viz An Inuentarye in wryting conteyning the seuerall sortes and quantities of all all manner of Apparrell garments and wearing Lynnen and other suche like necessities whatsoever appertinent to the person of the righte honorable Thomas Earle of Dorsett Lorde highe Treasurer of Englande made the {blank} Daye of June in the yere of o[u]r Lorde god one thowsond sixe hundred and Seauen and in the yeres of the Raigne of o[u]r most gracious Soveraigne Kinge James viz of England France and Ireland the fist and of Scotland the fortithe beyng subscribed to euery page thereof with the hand and name of the saied Lord Treasurer and whereof one parte remayne with his Lordshipp and one other parte with those twoe gentlemen that ar[e] Attendantses vppon the saied Lord Treasurer in hys chamber. All which saied Robes of all sortes with their ornaments and pertinentes whatsoever, and all which saied apparrell garmentes wearinge Lynnen and necessaryes of all sortes appertinent to my person as is aforesaid and not beyng noated or specified in the saied Inuentarie as by me giuen away or as otherwise put out of the chardge of the saied Inuentarye and which shalbe remayning at the tyme of my decease I do whollie giue will and bequeathe vnto my saied Sonne Buchurst his executors administratores and assignes. More I giue will and bequeathe vnto hym my Coronett of gould

and guilte Cuppe of Assaye apperteyning to the state and Dignitie of an Earle. And likewise my Collor of gould according to the order of Sainct George, having in it sixe and fortie seuerall peeces, whereof three and twentie peeces ar[e] made every one of them after the forme of a Rose and like to the fashoon of a garter abowte the same peece and other three and twentie peeces ar[e] made euery one of them ~~like~~ in the forme of a knott of gould together with one George of gould pendant to the same Coller the saied George beyng set all over with Diamondes and Rubies vppon the one side of the same George.

f.11r: Also I giue will and bequeth vnto my saied welbeloued Sonne Robert Lorde Buckhurst after my Decease for and during his life only out of those Jewelle of gould pearle and precious stone which I keepe and reserve as Jewelles for meselfe The sole vse and occupation onlie of one Ringe of gould enameled blacke and set round ouer all the whole Rynge with Diamondes to the number of twentie whereof fyve Diamondes beyng placed in the vppermost parte of the sayed Rynge do represent the fashion of a Crosse and the other fyfteene ar[e] sett rounde and ouer all the saied Rynge. And likewise the sole vse and occupac[i]on onlie of one picture of the late famous Quene Elizabeth beyng cutt out of an Aggett with excellent similitude ovall fashion and sett in gould with twentie sixe Rubies abowte the Circle of the same. And one orient peare pearle to the same. And likewise the sole vse and occupac[i]on onlie of one Ringe of gould enameled blacke, wherein is set a greate Table Diamonde beyng perfect and pure and of muche worthe. And likewise the sole vse and occupation onlie of one chayne of gould Spanishe worke conteyninge in it fortie eighte seuerall peeces of gould of Diuers sortes enameled white and fortie sixe ouall lynkes of gould likewise enameled white, whereof twelue of the biggest sorte of the sayed fortie eighte peeces beyng allso enameled white, haue likewise in euery <one> of them twoe Diamondes, and<sup>2</sup> so in all one hundred fortie fower Diamondes ouer and besides fortie sixe ouall linkes of gould which do houlde and knytt the sayed peeces and them selues together in forme of a Cheyne. And after the Decease of my saied Sonne Buchurst Then I giue will and bequeathe the like sole vse and occupc[i]on onlie of the saied ringe sett with twentie Diamondes and of the saied picture of the late Quene Elizabeth and of the saied Rynge with the greate table Diamonde and of the saied Chayne Spanishe worke set with one hundred fortie fower Diamondes and of all and euery of them vnto my sayed neiphue Richard Sacvill his eldest Sonne for and during

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<sup>2</sup> RH marginalia: fashioned like the true SS haue in euerie one of them The diamondes good other twelue of a lesser sorte of the said fortie eight peeces being fashioned ouall wise haue in euery one of them two diamondes and twentie fower peeces of a saied lesser sorte of the said fortie eighte peeces being.

his life online. And after his Decease then vnto the next heire male begotten of the bodye of the saied Richard Sacvill my neiphue for and during his life onlie. And so from heire male to heire male of the Sacuilles after the Decease of euery one of them seuerally and successiuelie for and during the life and liues onlie of euery suche heire male seuerallie and successiuelie chardging and earnestlie requiring all and euery my saied heire males before specified euen as they regarde the last request of hym by whose greate travell care and industrie is the diuine prouidence of god that hath vouchsaffed to giue it shall so please to contynewe it they are like to peceiue the addition and advancement of so greate honoure possessions and patrimony That allthoughe percast in the strickt course of the Common Lawes of this Realme thentayle of goodes and chattelles maye hardlie stande vprighte that it for the preservac[i]on and contynewaunce of this guifte of myne, namelie of the saied twoe rynges picture and chayne of gould intended by me to remayne as our heiriloom to the house and familie of the Sacvilles so longe as Almightye god (according to the effectes of his former goodnes vnto that house by the contynewaunce thereof during the sapce of so many hundred yeres past) shall please to vphould the same, they and euery of them will forbear in any sorte to oppugne it or to bringe it in question, or to brandle or Controuert the will of theire so well Deserving Auncestor, and speciallie in a f.11v: matter so honest reasonable fitt and conveyent as this is. But rather with all willing readie and contented myndes to suffer the same to passe as an heirelome from heire male to heire male according to the true Intent and meaning of this my last will and testament in that behalfe. All and euery which saied <fower> Jewelles before specified and namlie the saied twoe Rynges, the sayed picture and the sayed Cheyne. But farre aboue all the Rest the saied Rynge sett allouer with twentie Diamondes as is aforesayed I desire and chardge my sayed Sonne Buchurst vppon my blessing and in like sorte all other the heires male whome god shall vouchsaffe from age to age to raise vnto my house and familie, and vnto whome is the heighest so please my hartie desire and meaninge is the sayed twoe Rynges picture and Cheyne, but farre aboue all the rest the sayd Rynge set with twentie Diamondes as is aforesayed may lyniallie and successiuelie descend and come for euer. Namelie that with prouident care and heedfull Circumspection they will saffellie keepe, reteyne and preserue all and euery the saied twoe Rynges picture and cheyne but speciallie the sayed Rynge set with twentie Diamondes as it aforesayed (whensoever and as often as they or any of them shall come to theire handes and possession) even as one of the greatest guiftes and Jewelles which in true estimac[i]on all Circumstances confidences I haue to lease vnto them. And to the Intent they may knowe howe iust and greate cause bothe they and I haue to hould the sayed Rynge with twentie Dyamondes in so heighe esteeme, it is most

requisite that I do here set Downe the whole Cause and Circumstance howe and from whome the same Ringe did come to my possession which was this. In the begynning of the monethe of June one thowsand sixe hundred and seven This Ringe thus sett with twentie Diamondes as is aforesayed was sent vnto me from my most gracious souraigne Kinge James by that honorable personage the Lord Haye one of the gentlemen of his highnes Bedchamber the Courte then beyng at Whitehall in London and I at that tyme remaining at Horsely House in Surrey twentie myles from London where I laye in suche extremitye of sicknes as it was a Common and <a> Constant Reporte ouer all London that I was dead and the same confidentlie affirmed euen vnto the kinges highnes hymselfe. vppon which occasion it pleased his most excellent maiestie in token of his gracious goodnes and greate favoure towards me to send the saied Lord Hay with the saied Ringe and this Royall message vnto me namelie that his highnes wished a speedie and a perfect recouerye of my healthe with all happie and good Successe vnto me, and that I might liue as longe as the Dyamonds of that Rynge (which therewithall he Deliuered vnto me) did indure. And in token thereof required me to weare it and keepe it for his sake. This most gracious and comfortable message restored a newe life vnto me as coming from so renowned and benigne a Soueraigne vnto a Seruaunte so farre vnworthie of so greate a favoure and vppon whome not longe before it had pleased his Ma[ies]tie yea in that very first daye wherein we all had the happynes to behould hym, not onlie to bestowe the honor of a privie Councillor but allso without any awnsverable Desert or meritt of myne proceeding to confirm that most honorable place of heighe Treasurer of England vnto me, which the late Quen Elizabeth after fourteene yeres service and tenne yeres folowing her Courte but not before vouchsafed I must needes yet saye most graciouslye so farre as it became voide to graunte vnto me.

f.12r: Allso it shall not be impertinent that I do here likewise set downe the manner and Circumstance howe those other three Jewelles aforesaid namelie the picture of the late Quene Elizabeth: the saied Rynge sett with a greate Table Dyamond and the saied Cheyne of goulde sett with a hundred fortie fower Diamondes did come to my handes and possession. Whereof the sayed picture was bequeathed vnto me by my Sister the Ladie Anne Dacres Deceased sometymes wife to Gregory Fynes and so expressed in her will vnto me: beyng a guifte which she very well did knowe would of all other be most pleasing and acceptable vnto me. I having receyued from her maiestie many speciall graces and favoures as first in my younger yeres beyng by her particular choise and liking selected to a contynewall privat attendance vppon her owne person, and ymeadiatlie after my Fatheres Decease by calling me

to be a Baron and pere of the Realme: And next to the honor of the moste noble order of the garter. Then sent at twoe seuerall tymes with the honor of her Embassador speciall abowte matteres of greate truste and importance. As first into France concerning a secrate Treatise of a marriage betwixt her ma[ies]tie and Henry the fourthe sonne of Harrie the eighte <of France> began with her H. by Katherine de medice then Quene mother of France. And after into the lowe Countries abowte motion of a peace betwixt her maiestie and Spayne vnder hande first moued to her highnes euen by the Duke of Parma ~~her~~ <him> selfe and by me to be imparted to the States and with them to Debate the consideration thereof. And after this by choosing me to be one of her privie Councill. And last of all by advancing me to a most emynent place of greate state and Dignitie in the common wealthe as namelie to be highe Treasurer of England which she did notwithstanding a most earnest opposic[i]on of some greate p[er]sons whoe then very mightelie withstood the same. All which favoures were muche the more to be esteemed by me because they proceeded from her that may iustlie be accompted amonge the number of the most rarest wisest and worthiest Quenes of the worlde of whom I maye trulie saye that whilest she liued she was feare full and formidable to all her Enemyes abroade gratefull and faithfull to her confederate Frendes and neighbours And lastlie at home by all her Servauntes and Subiects both hartelye beloued and Loyallie obeyed. And nowe that she is gone to god her blessed name remayneth glorious f.12v. and famous to all posteritie and nations yea even to the very vttermost endes of the worlde. Likewise the sayed Rynge of gould with the greate Table Diamond sett therein together with the saied Cheyne of gould Spanishe worke and with a hundred fortie fower Diamondes therein set were allso giuen vnto me by the Kinge of Spayne I beyng then the Commissioner Deputed with other by my most gracious Soveraigne Kinge James at his first Entrance into this Kingdome for the Conclusion of the peace betwixt my saied renowned Soveraigne of the one parte and the saied Kinge of Spayne and the Archdukes of th[e] other parte [...] Item I giue will and bequeathe vnto the Countesse of Dorsett my saied most deerlie beloued wife after my decease for and duringe her life the safe keeping and custodye only of suche Jewelles of gould pearle and precious stone as hereafter ar[e] here mentioned and set downe beyng parte of those Jewelles which I keepe and reserue as Jewelles for me selfe that is to saye <of> One Jewell of gould beyng a fayer color conteyning twentie seaven ~~peeces~~ seuerall peeces and one litle pendant Jewell fixed to the middle peece thereof of which saied twentie seaven peeces sixe of them ar[e] eche one enameled white and made like to the fashion of a Rose and so resembleth a white rose with a table Rubie in the myddest of euery one, and a faire peare pearle pendaunt to the same: And other sixe of the sayed Twentie seauen peeces ar[e] each one enameled



redd and made likewise to the fashion of a Rose and so resembleth a Redd rose with a Table Diamond in the myddest of euery one and a faire peare pearle likewise pendant to euery one. And other fourteene peeces of the sayed twentie seaven peeces beyng of a smaller bignes then the saied roses ar[e] sett betwene euery of the sayd white and red roses to make a Deuision betwixt them, having faire round orient pearle fastened to either end of euery of the saied fourteene peeces. And the last of the sayed twentie seaven peeces beyng the middle peece of them all dothe likewise <somewhat> resemble the fashion of a Rose, having one bigge Dyamond in the myddest thereof, and sixe lesser Diamondes abowte the same and three litle Diamondes in the Topp: At the end of which middle peece is fixed the saied litle pendant Jewell. For the vpper parte of which litle Jewell is sett a faire greate Table Rubie and vnder the same Rubie a very faire large and longe Table Diamond of greate price with a faire orient greate pearle pendant to the same. The sayed Coller of gould having a shorte blacke rybin lace sowed to either end thereof. And likewise of one other Jewell of gould enameled on the one side with diuers Coloures and beyng set on the other side with fyve riche precious stones as namelie In the toppe of that other side with one faire ovall Opall, and next vnder that with one faire table Diamond: And on the lefte side of the saied Jewell with one faire Table Sapphire blue and on the righte syde thereof with one faire table Emerald and next vnder the saied Sapphire and Emerald with one faire Table Rubie And vnderneathe them all having one very faire greate peare pearle pendant to the same. And likewise of one other Jewell of gould fashioned like the forme of a feather Deviding it selfe into twoe sprigges of gould featherwise whereof the one haue three faire greate pearles pendant thervppon, and the other hath likewise other three faire greate peare pearles pendant thervppon. The sayed Duble sprigg beyng on the one side enameled with white and redd and on the other syde appearing all playne gould. And likewise of one other Jewell of pearle conteyning sixe and fiftie greate pearle beyng a riche karkanet made into twoe shorte ropes of pearle whereof the one conteyneth twentie seaven of the sayed fiftie sixe pearle, and the other conteyneth twentie nyne of the sayed fiftie sixe pearle. The saied karkanett having a shorte blue silke rybin lace sowed to either end thereof. Of all and singular which saied fower Jewelles of gould pearle and precious stone last before mentio[n]ed as namelie of the saied Coller and of the saied Jewell set with fiue riche precious stones and of the saied Jewell fashioned like the forme of a feather. And of the sayd Jewell of pearle f.13r: conteyninge fiftie sixe greate pearle made into twoe shorte ropes of pearle I do giue will and bequethe the onlie custodie and safe keeping in manner and forme folowinge that is to saye. First to my saied most deerelie beloved wife for and during her life and after her decease Then in like manner to th[e] sayed Lorde Buchurst

myne eldest Sonne for and during his life. And after his Decease then to the saied Richard Sacvill my neiphue for and during his life. And after his Decease Then to my next heire male for and during his life. And so from heire male to heire male of the Sacvilles after the Decease of euery one of them seuerallie and successiuelie when and so often and for so longe tyme as any suche custodie and safe keeping shall at any tyme happen to fall and belonge to them or any of them according to the course, order, tenor and true meaning of this my present last will and testament on that behalfe. Prouided neuerthesse and so I ordayne and Declare my will to be that if the saied Richard Sacvill my neiphue or any other my next heire male or heires male for the tyme beyng shall at any tyme happen to take a wife and marry by and with the consent of his father and mother or any one of them surviving, or if they shall bothe be Deceased Then by and with the consent of any Two or moe of his next or neerest kynnes. That then my mynde and meaning is that all and euery suche wyfe or wyves which he or they or any of them from tyme to tyme shall so happen to marrye shall haue and so accordinglie I do giue will and bequeathe vnto her and them and euery of them the sole vse and occupac[i]on onlie of all and euery the saied Fower Jewelles as namelie of the saied Collier and of the saied Jewell sett with fyve riche precious stones and of the Jewell fashioned like to the forme of a feather and of the saied Jewell of pearle conteyninge Fiftie sixe greate pearle made into twoe shorte ropes of pearle and of all and euery of them for and during her and their life and liuers and the life and liues of her and their husbände and husbändes ioyntlye. And then I do instantlie chardge and require the saied Countesse my wife, the saied Lord Buchurst myne eldest Sonne and the saied Richard Sacvill my neipue as all and euery other my next heires male and heire male whatsoever in whose handes and possession the saied fower Jewelles last aboue mentioned or any of them shall <then> happen to be and remayne that within convenient tyme after any such mariage so had and solempnized or fullie concluded and agreed vpon as it aforesayed they make present Delivery of all and euery the sayed fower Jewelles vnto all and euery suche wife and wives which so successivelie shall happen to marrye as it aforesayed. And she to haue and to hould the sole vse and onlie occupation thereof for and during her life and the life of euery suche one her husband ioyntly. And to the end that as well the saied Countesse my wife, the <saied> Lord Buchurst myne eldest Sonne, the saied Richard Sacvill my nepiue and all and euery other my next heires male and heire male whatsoever as likewise all and euery such wife and wyves so married or to be married as it aforesayed may orderlie and iustly execute and performe their seuerall partes and duties respectiuelie as well in deliuering as in receyving of the saied fower Jewelles according as the order course tenor and true meaning of this my last will and

testament shall directe bynde them in that behalfe. Therefore my mynde and meaninge is, and so I do hartelie Declare will and ordayne that the saied fower Jewelles last before mentioned and euery of them shall from tyme to tyme and at all tymes when and as often as any suche Deliuerie and receipte is to be performed according to the order course tenor and true meaninge of this my last will and testament be then deliuered and receyved by wryting Indented to be made betwixt the partie or parties so Deliuering and the partie or parties so receyving the same: Wherby as well the Deliuerer may haue good warrant for his Discharge as allso the Receyver may be at all tymes sufficiently chardged to awnswere the same. Prouided allso and so I ordayne and Declare my will to be that when and so often as at any tyme hereafter my next heire male at the tyme of the Decease of his Auncestor shall fortune to be within age: That then and in suche case the executor or executores or if theire be noe executores then the Administrator or Administratores of euery suche Auncestor so deceasing shall presentlie and with all convenyent speede Demaund take and receyve into his or theire handes and possession as well the saied Rynge of gould enameled blacke<sup>3</sup> f.13v: wherein is sett a greate Table Diamonde and allso the sayed Cheyne of gould Spanishe worke beyng sett w[i]th Diamondes to the nomber of one hundred fortie fower, as likewise the saied Jewell of gould beyng a faire Collor conteyning twentie seauen ~~peeces~~ seuerall peeces and one litle pendant Jewell fixed to the middle peece thereof. And allso the sayed Jewell of gould enameled on the one side with diuers Coloures and beyng set on the other side with fyve riche precious stones: And allso the saied Jewell fashioned like the forme of a feather. And allso the saied Jewell of pearle conteyninge fiftie six greate pearle beyng a riche karkanett made into twoe seuerall ropes of pearle and all and euery of them: namelie of all and euery suche person or person as then shall happen to haue and possesse the same or any parte thereof either by force and vertue of this my last will and testament or by any other meanes what soeuer: And then I chardge will and instantlye desire the saied Executor or Administrator that within some convenyent tyme, after they haue so receyued the same, they make choise of one principall Discreete person and of fower <other> trustie and sufficient men to attende hym and they fyve to carry and Conduct all and euery the saied Jewelles last abouemen[t]io[n]ed vnto the newe Colledge in Oxford<sup>4</sup> there to be Deliuered into the handes and Custodye of the warden of the saied Colledge for the tyme beyng, and to suche senior fellowe of the same Colledge ioyntlie as there shall happen to be present there, by wryting

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<sup>3</sup> RH marginalia: And sett round over all the whole ring w[i]th diamonds to the nomber of twentie all so the said picture of the late famous Queene Elizabeth and allso the said ring of gold enameled blacke.

<sup>4</sup> LH marginalia: the true name of the Colledge.

Indented conteyning the seuerall sortes and parcelles of the saied fower Jewelles according to the particular description thereof in this my last will and testament. One which parte of which writing Indented shall remayne with the saied executor or administrator for the tyme beyng that so shall deliuer the same and the other parte with the saied warden and senior fellowe that so shall receyue the same: vnto whose safe keeping and custodye I do whollie Commend and Committ the saied fower Jewelles pearle and precious stone before specified to be kept and preserued by them during the minoritie of my sayed next heire male with their best endevores, care and prouidence within the saied Colledge in a stronge Chest of Iron vnder twoe seuerall keyes the which I will prouide for that purpose whereof the one key shall remayne with the saied warden and the other key with the senior fellowe of the sayed Colledge not meaning to haue them chardged or awnsverable for the same if by any vyolence or mishappe without their owne consent or privitie or their owne willfull and corrupt negligence (the Doubte or suspicion whereof the Lorde of heauen dothe knowe bothe is and euer shalbe farre from my thoughte) the same should fortune to be lost or taken awaye. And when my saied next heire male shalbe come to his full age: Then vppon Request by suche heire male to be made <vnto> the saied warden and senior fellowe My desire will and meaninge is that all the saied Jewelles be redeliuered vnto hym by the saied warden and senior fellowe by writing Indented and in manner and forme mutatis mutandis as is before set downe and specified for the Deliuery thereof vnto them. So as my sayed next heire male do then paye vnto the saied warden and senior fellowe for and towards their greate Care and paynes taken for the safe keeping and preserving of the saied Jewelles for the first yere viz. To the saied warden tennes poundes. To the saied senior fellowe fyve poundes. And to all the fellowes and Schollers besides for encrease of their Diet at some one Dynner or Supper in suche manner and measure as by the saied warden and senior fellowe shalbe order be set downe the somme of twelue poundes, the more to moue them all to a generall Care and assistance for the safe keeping and preserving of the saied Jewelles. And allthoughe it should so happen that my next heire male do aryue to his full age before the saied Jewelles shall haue remayned in the Custodye of the saied warden and senior fellowe one whole yere compleate and therevppon shall require the Deliuery of them accordinglie: Yet it is my meaninge and so I do herebie explayne and Declare my will to be that the saied tenne poundes, fyve poundes and twelue poundes shall vppon receipt of the saied Jewelles be payed and satisfied in manner and forme as is before set downe, howe soone soeuer my next heire male shall come to his full yeres. But if his minorite of yeres shall fortune so longe tyme to contynewe as that it last by the space of twoe, three, fower, fyve, sixe or moe or lesse beyng

more then one yere Then my will and meaninge is that for euery yere besides the saied first yere there shalbe a farther allowance in money to be made vnto them in forme folowinge that is to saye To the saied warden ouer and besides the aforesaied tenne poundes for the first yere the somme f.14r. of three poundes more for the second yere. To the senior fellowe ouer and besides the aforesaied fyve poundes for the first yere the somme of fortie shillinges more for the seconde yere. And to the Fellowes and Schollers ouer and besides the saied twelue poundes for the first yere the some of fyve markes more for the second yere and so for euery yere during the minoritie of my saied next heire male ouer and besides the sayed allowance of tenne poundes, fyve poundes and twelue for the first yere. The like Allowance of three poundes, fortie shillinges and fyve markes more as is set downe for the sayed second yere. And so my will and meaning is that from tyme to tyme and at all tymes hereafter when and as often as my saied next heire male at the tyme of the Decease of his Auncestor shall fortune to be within age That then and in suche case the Executor or Administrator of euery suche Auncestor so Deceasinge as is aforesaied shall presentlie and with all convenuent speede Demaunde take and receyue into his handes and possession all and singular the saied Jewelles of all and euery suche person or persons as then shall happen to haue and possesse the same or any parte thereof as is aforesaied. And within some convenyent tyme to carry and conduct the saied Jewelles vnto newe Colledge in Oxford there to be Deliuered and kept in manner and forme as is before specified and Declared. And so in like manner from tyme to tyme and at all tymes hereafter when and as often as any suche heire male shall come to his full age, then vppon request as is aforesayed the saied fower Jewelles to be redeliuered to hym agayne by the saied warden or Subwarden and senior fellowe for the tyme beyng by writing Indented and in manner and forme as is before specified and declared. This travell Care Circumspecc[i]on and laboure by the saied warden ~~and~~ <or> Subwarden and senior fellowe to be taken and susteyned as is afores[aie]d beyng a worke of pietie and charitie to further and fullfill the good and godlie Intention ~~of~~ and will of the Dead I am the boli[e]uer thus when I am gone to recommend and Committ vnto them, the rather because ~~the~~ as well the saied Lorde Buchurst myne eldest sonne as all other ~~my younger~~ my younger sonnes were and haue ben bred and broughte vp in their studdyes of Learninge within the Wares and walles of the saied Colledge: And for that me selfe besides havinge the honor to be the Chauncellor of that vniuersitie haue euer ben bothe glad and readie to performe all good offices travelles and endevoures not onlie for the good and benefiit of the whole vniuersitie in generall, but cheifelie euen for that Colledge in especiall & or as betwixt that Colledge and my selfe and betwene my sonnes and that Colledge there is and hathe ben a pecualiar and

reciprocall bond of speciall Loue and liking thus knytt and tyed betwixt vs whereby I am strengthened with the more confident hope that so worthie a warden Subwarden and Senior as that Colledge is like allwayes to possesse will not at any tyme refuse (bothe for their owne Creditt and reputac[i]on and in the memorye of hym that once was a principall Ruler in that vniuersitie amongst them, and in all their priuat causes and occasons most readie to helpe and further them even with willing myndes to vndergoe the satisfaction and performance of this my reasonable iuste and last request vnto them): for the whiche thoughe I in this worlde from whence I must Depart should not sufficientlie requyte them: Yet god shall rewarde them in the worlde to come with a farre better recompense then I or any worldelie man is able to giue them. Allso I do giue will and bequeathe vnto my saied Sonne Buchurst all my Georges and Garters of gould whatsoeuer not before by me given willed nor bequeathed. Item I giue will and bequeathe vnto the Right reuerend father in god John Archbishopp of Canterburye my deere good Lord and freind a Rynge of gould enameled greene, wherein is sett with Clawes of gould a faire square table Emerald set with a foyle and enameled greene: Desyring his grace to weare and keepe it as a memorye of my hartie Love vnto hym [...] Item I giue will and bequeathe vnto my very good Lord and Kynnesman Charles Earle of Nottingham f.14v: Lord highe Admirall of England One cheyne of gould made of wyer worke conteyning three fouldes and havinge a George pendant thereunto, the sayed George beyng sett vppon the one side thereof w[i]th Eleaven Diamondes and fower Rubies and the other side only enameled. And one garter of purple veluet layed on eache side with twoe litle Chaynes of gould and with diuers Letters of gould in the same garter enameled blue and white, and set with three Diamondes seaven smale rubies and twoe greate Rubies and one litle Emerald. And one Ringe of gould enameled white wherein is set one faire greate Table Rubie. Desiring his Lordshipp to weare them and keepe them as a remembraunce of my hartie Loue vnto hym. Item I giue will and bequeathe vnto my speciall good Lorde and Kynnesman Thomas Earle of Suff[olk] Lord Chamberleyn of the Kinges house One cheyne of gould made of wyer worke conteyning eighte fowldes and havinge a George pendant therevnto. The sayed George beyng set vppon the one side thereof with nyne Dyamondes and seaven Rubies, and on the other side with seaven Diamondes and nyne Rubies. And one garter layed with twoe litle cheynes of gould on eache syde having {blank} And one Rynge of gould enameled black wherein is set a faire great Diamond rysing slope to the forme of a litle table in the toppe. And one Ring of gould enameled blacke wherein is set with Clawes of gould an opall like to the forme a Slowe worme desring his Lordshipp to weare them and keepe them as a Remembraunce of my hartie love vnto hym. Item I giue will and bequeathe

vnto my dere good Lord and freind Gilbert Earle of Shrewsburye one Ringe of gould enameled blacke wherein is sett a faire poynted Dyamond and one George on bothe sydes beyng of gould enameled and with three litle Cheynes on the topp to hang the same by. And one Garter of purple veluet layed on eache syde with twoe litle cheynes of gould, and with Diuers letters of gould enameled blue and set with one Diamond vppon the End of the same garter desyring his Lordshipp to weare and keepe them as a Remembraunce of my hartie loue vnto hym. Item I giue will and bequeathe vnto my very good Lord and freind William Earle of Worcester one Ringe of gould enameled white wherein is sett with Clawes of gould a faire Emerald put lozendgewise and rising slope to the forme of a litle table in the topp and standinge without a foile. Allso one George on bothe sides beyng of gould enameled and with three litle cheynes on the topp to hange the same by. And likewise one Garter of purple veluett laied on eache side with twoe litle cheynes of gould and with diuers Letters of playne gould and with sixe trafles enameled white to make seperac[i]on betwixt the wordes. Desiring his Lordshipp to weare them and keepe them as a Rememraunce of my hartie loue vnto hym. Item I giue will and bequeathe vnto my very good Lord and frend Harry earle of Northampton one Ringe of gould enameled white wherein is set vppon a foule a greate square Emerald rising slope to the forme of a Table in the topp. And one faire longe George of blue Aggat stone wherein on the one side is formed out of the saied blue Aggat stone it selfe the picture of Saint George on horsebacke with sixe Diamondes and sixe Rubies set on the same side. And on the other side the like picture is formed in gould Ennameled with twelue Diamondes and twelue rubies set likewise on that other side, and with one greate pearle pendant to the same <George> Desiring his Lordshipp to weare them and keepe them as a Remembraunce of my hartie loue vnto hym. Item I giue will and bequathe vnto my singular good Lorde my most speciall and deerest freind the Earle of Salisburie one cheyne of gould of open Spanishe worke enameled with diuers Coloures and conteyning fiftie one seuerall peeces of three seuerall sortes, whereof thirteene peeces beyng of the first biggest sorte ovall fashion do hange in the Chaine longe ovall wise, and other thirteene peeces beyng of a lesser second sorte and likewise ovall fashion do hang in the Chayne Crosse ovallwise and twentie fyue other peeces beyng of the leaste and third sorte ar[e] made to hould and knitt together the other twoe sortes of ovall fashion and themselues eache to other and so all together do make the forme of a faire Chayne with a George on bothe sides pendant to the same chaine and set on the one side thereof with three Rubies and twelue Diamondes: And likewise on the other side thereof with the like number of three Rubies and Twelue Diamondes. And likewise a Garter of purple veluett layed on eache syde with twoe f.15r: litle chaines of gould and with

diuers Letteres of gould enameled white and set with twelue Diamondes and one greate Diamond in the middest of the buckle. And one Rynge enameled blacke wherein is et a faire greate Diamond rising slope to a litle Table in the topppe. And one Rynge of gould enameled white wherein is sett a faire table Rubie. And one Rynge of gould likewise enameled white wherein is set with Clawes of gould and without a foule a faire Rocke Rubie: And one Ringe of gould enameled blacke wherein is set an Emerald vppon the foyle tabled longe wise of the newe myne. And one Rynge of gould enameled white wherein is sett a faire table Saphur blewe. And allso one ryng of gould enameled blacke wherein is set with Clawes of gould a rare Opall fashioned like a harte Desiring his Lordshipp to weare them and keepe them as faithfull memoryes of my most hartie loue vnto hym. Beyng most assured that his Lordshippe according to the noblenes of his owne nature and the sincere meritt of my true harte towardes hym will not behould the value of the guifte vnto hym (which bothe hymselfe and meselfe may iustlie esteeme as a mere trifle) but rather the value of the giuers harte towardes hym, which allwayes hathe ben is and euen wilbe so longe as life endureth as firmelie and as trulie Deuoted and knitt unto hym as it is possible for one freinde to be vnto another: With which faithfull bond the heauenlie god dothe knowe I haue felt my harte theise many yeres fast tyed vnto hym. Not onlie my respect of those privat particular benefittes and favoures which he so often and so amplie hath shewed bothe towardes me and myne (wherein meselfe likewise so with neither hathe nor <euer> wilbe founde so ungratefull either vnto hym or any other as not to seeke to the best of my power euen with all kyndenes and thanckfullnes to requite the same agayne.

f.15v: Item I giue vnto the reuerend Father in god {blank} Bishopp of London my ~~very~~ deere good Lord and freinde a Ringe of gould enameled blacke wherein is sett an Emerald of the olde Myne vppon a foyle being tabled longe wise. Desiring hys Lordshipp to weare it <& keepe it> as a Remembraunce of my hartie love vnto hym.

Ff.17r-19v: A codicil appended to the will, dated 1 June 1607

f.17v: And whereas heretofore I haue Deliuered and Committed to the safe keping and custodye of my sayed most Derelie beloued wife Diuers and sundrye Jewelles as well of pearle as of precious Stone with certeyne parcelles of guilte plate and certeyne parcelles of siluer vessell, the sayed Jewelles beyng estimatiuelie valewed to be worthe one thowsand and Eleaven poundes and the weighte of the saied guilte plate conteyning allso by estimate one



thowsand three hundred & thirtie nyne ownces quarter and a halfe or thereabowtes beyng likewise estimatiue lie valewed f.18r: is sett downe to be worthe one hundred twentie twoe poundes one shillinge twoe pence halfepennye farthing.

f.18r: And whereas likewise I haue heretofore Deliuered and committed to the safe keepinge and custodye of my sayed most Derelie beloued wife certeyne Jewelles sett and garnished with gould precious stone and pearle as namelie Eighte pendants of ~~pearle~~ gould enameled beyng estimated worthe eighte hundred fower score and twelue powndes [...] The vse and fruition of which <such> Jewelles and pendants I did euer meane and intend Duringe myne owne life vnto meselfe and after my Decease then to the vse and behoofe of my saied Deereli beloued daughter the Ladye Marye Nevell.

f.18v: And whereas likewise I haue heretofore Deliuered and committed to the safe keepinge and custodye of my sayed most Derelie beloued wife, aswell one Cheyne of pearle conteyning in nomber one thowsand pearles as allso certeyne Jewelles sett and garnished with pearle and precious stone, as namlie twoe Bracelettes fower and twentie Buttons with opalles and Rubies and fower opalles to serue for eare pendants, the sayed pearles and Jewelles beyng esimated to be worthe one thowsand fower hundred sixtie and fower poundes or thereaboutes [...]. The vse and frui[t]ion of all which Jewelles and pearle I did euer meane and intend during myne owne life vnto my selfe and after my Decease then to the vse and behoofe of my saied Deerelie beloued Daughter the Ladie Anne Glenham.

f.19v: To my Cosen Garrawaye to buye a Ringe to weare for my sake twoe hundred poundes. To John Surtlinge to buye a Ringe to weare for my sake twoe hundred poundes.

## Appendix E

### ‘Inspired: contemporary views of Renaissance jewellery’

From 11 November 2011 to 30 January 2012 six items of contemporary jewellery were displayed in Room 46 of the British Museum, juxtaposed with the Tudor material. The objects were created by a group of six early-career silversmiths as a result of a project developed alongside research for this thesis. The craftsmen spent the academic year 2010 to 2011 refining their skills at a residential post-graduate training workshop called Bishopsland, in Oxfordshire ([www.bishopsland.org.uk](http://www.bishopsland.org.uk)). In November 2010, the group from Bishopsland was invited to view selected items of sixteenth and early seventeenth-century jewellery from the department of Prehistory and Europe. The objects included signet rings and hat ornaments, object types that were certainly worn by men of the period. In keeping with the research themes of this thesis, which has explored the meanings that early modern men assigned to the jewels that they wore, owned, and circulated, the Bishopsland silversmiths were asked to create modern creations that conveyed similar meanings for men today. Rather than create pastiche copies of museum objects, the group were required to remain faithful to the sentiments embodied within male Renaissance jewellery, drawing inspiration from this material. By respecting the meanings assigned by contemporaries to their items of personal adornment, the task was to create modern pieces that considered the attributes and preoccupations of a twenty-first century man.

#### Thomas Asquith



Belt-buckle made of sterling silver, moonstone, opal, and leather; 45mm x 90mm.

Asquith created a buckle after having seen Tudor examples within the British Museum collections and illustrated in contemporary portraiture. He modernised the Tudor buckle through the use of neutral coloured stones and oxidized silver, in line with a modern male

aesthetic. Techniques employed in the creation of this piece included oxidizing, engraving, and stone-setting.

### **Elizabeta Banach**



Neck-chain made of sterling silver; approx. length 350mm.

Banach was inspired by Tudor chains that were in great profusion in the period. She was particularly taken by the large chains of office worn by men of power and so created a geometric chain more suited for a modern aesthetic. Techniques employed included forging and chain-making.

### **Gillian Fowler**



Brooch made of sterling silver with sapphire; 70mm x 20mm x 12mm.

Fowler was struck by the form of the chimney pieces at Hampton Court Palace and embraced this in her design. It reflects the domesticity that many young men today seek in establishing their own household, as homeowner, husband, and father. Techniques used for the making of this brooch include engraving and stone-setting.

## James Hughes



Belt-buckle made of sterling silver with a square-cut peridot; 50mm x 70mm x 16mm.

Hughes took on an object type that was fairly ubiquitous within the period and remained functional. He wanted to make it a highly personal object by using the form of an escutcheon (shield) from family coats of arms. By decorating it with a simplified crest it makes subtle reference to an individual's heritage. Rather than make an overt statement about one's wealth and power, Hughes thought that in modern times it would be more apt to simply allude to a rich historical context. Techniques used for the making of this belt-buckle included engraving and the use of a concealed sprung hinge.

## Joseph Langshaw



Neck-chain made of sterling silver with peridot; length 670mm.

Langshaw was inspired by the highly ornate symbolic and ritualistic chains in use throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For his 'chain of office' he remained mindful of modern trends towards rituals and religion. He tried to reflect the form of rosary beads, as

well as chains that incorporate Christian, ancient Egyptian, and pagan symbolism. Techniques used in the production of this object included hand engraving, forging, and hand fabrication.

### **Aoife White**



Business-card holder made of sterling silver; 95mm x 60mm x 12mm.

White was struck by the ornate nature of jewellery worn by men in the Renaissance and picked up on contemporary aesthetics such as floral motifs. She created a business-card holder – a suitable personal accessory for use by a modern man. By adopting the aggressive symbol of a fiery Celtic dragon, though only its tail remains visible on the surface of the case, she created an object appropriate for a successful modern tycoon wishing to demonstrate his dominance and power within the world of business. Techniques used included chasing, repoussé, box- and hinge-making, and a button-sprung opening catch.